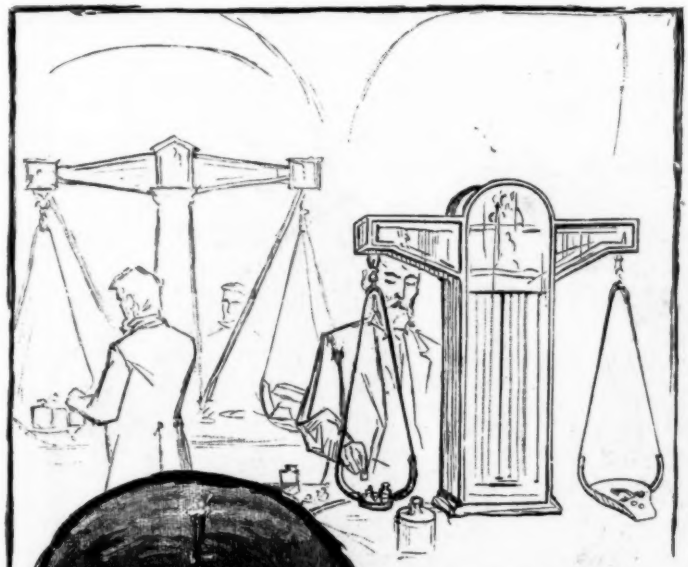
APPLETONS' JOURNAL.

THE AMERICAN AT WORK.

III.

THE GENESIS AND HISTORY OF A SILVER DOLLAR.



RECEIVING-ROOM.



THE VAULT.

TRAVELING in search of the information herein set forth, the writer, who had tired of his newspapers and magazines (as the most estimable and intelligent of persons occasionally will do, no matter how interesting and affluently suggestive these publications are), was struck, as he lazily surveyed the car, by the comprehensive vividness with which this commonplace vehicle embodied the almost limitless generosity of earth to man. Air and water seemed no longer bounteous in contrast with her. They were essential to the locomotion—the nice adjustment of oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, in the atmosphere enabled the water to boil over the furnaces without making the boiler red-hot; they played other very necessary parts with which every schoolboy who has studied natural science is familiar; but earth surpassed them in such a degree that in the imagination she took the form of a devoted mother, inexhaustible in her benefactions to her children, while they were merely as legal guardians, who now and then stepped in and did a perfunctory service for their helpless wards.

The whole material of the car had been yielded by earth: the wheels that beat such music upon the track as might have charmed the Norseman's ears in the iron days when Thor was worshiped; the windows that made pictures of the Jersey orchards, in which the peaches were just blossoming; the rose-color of the stained sky-lights; the durable framework of oak and pine; the pretty veneer of yellow-maple; the lacquer, the nickel-plate, and the varied paints, used in the decoration; and the lamps with the illuminating oil in their cisterns—were all of her largess. Even the ink upon the printed page of the magazine before him, and the cigar from which an indolent young man on the opposite seat was blowing

dreamy wreaths, had their source in her; and all around, inside the car and without, were the multiform manifestations of her bounty.

But, while the treasures she yields are so omnifarious, few of them come to man's hand in the condition that exactly suits them for his use, and his inventiveness and industry are necessary to refine, adapt, and complete them. The varnish upon the maple is as smooth and as glossy as satin, for its crudities have been extracted in a factory; and the minerals from which the interwoven colors in the frescoes were obtained went through many laborious processes before they were resolved into the scarlets, blues, and pinks. The most precious as well as the commonest of her gifts need some clarification or modification, and silver requires more than many others.



MELTING-ROOM.

On the writer's desk there is a small piece of whitish rock, which, at a hasty glance, looks like very ordinary rock indeed, and might be granite or sandstone. When its texture is more carefully examined, however, scintillant specks are discovered in it; it is heavy and brittle, and the predominant gray color is streaked with dark-blue or black. A mineralogist would not be at a loss to know why it is preserved, for it is a piece of unusually rich silver-ore, taken from the celebrated Ophir mine of the Comstock lode. Virgin silver is scarce, and it is in the form of this fragment that the metal is found which is used in the new silver dollars now current.

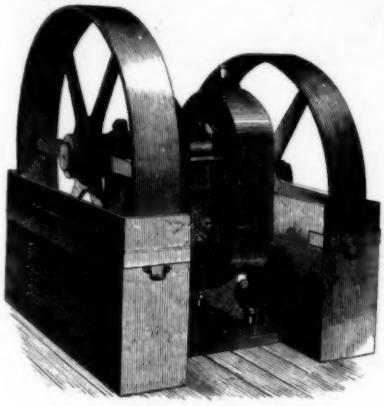
The fabrication of these coins, which are rapidly taking the place of the old greenbacks, and, despite their absurd design, are much pleasanter to handle, is to be described in this article; and the beginning of our history takes us into a mysterious region where spring, summer, autumn, and winter, are the same, where night is perpetual, and the inhabitants toil in a gray and sunless dusk. This wonderland is more than six times as many feet below the surface as the Goddess of Liberty on the dome of the Capitol, at Washington, is above it; it is threaded by narrow labyrinths scarcely wide enough for a man's passage, and honey-combed by dismal caverns; the heat is more than tropical, and the air is sulphurous. Never venture to explore it, timid reader; but be content to learn what you may of it in the city which thrives in the light of day two thousand feet above its deep and sinuous ways. Palpitating from exhaustion, we once stood in its heart with a consciousness that we were aliens to earth, and a vague dread that we were

about to make some soul-sacrificing compact with his imperial highness in red. Lanterns flickered in the distance and disappeared, and gnomes, stripped to the waist and still sweating from their toil, emerged like phantoms from the solid rock that imprisoned us, and seemed to melt in the unreal perspective—seemed, for much was seeming here to our visions that were used to the transparent honesty of the surface—and the gnomes were, in fact, not grotesque offsprings of the supernatural, but human laborers, with expansive chests and leathery hands. Our voices and every other sound seemed to run off upon heavy, rumbling wheels through the dim corridors; a mist seemed to fill the caverns; the enormous shadows seemed to come and go without giving an account for themselves in substance; but, in all the bewilderment of the fantasy, the awful reality of our inclosure never escaped us. The roof of our prison was a mountain two thousand feet high, and the floor rested upon the incalculable massiveness of rock, which is strong enough to restrain the fierce heart-burnings of the globe. Both the floor and the roof were silver to an uncertain thickness—silver of the kind seen in the fragment brought from the Ophir, with the same scintillant specks and streaks of dark-blue in it. This, in brief, is the genesis of the new dollars.



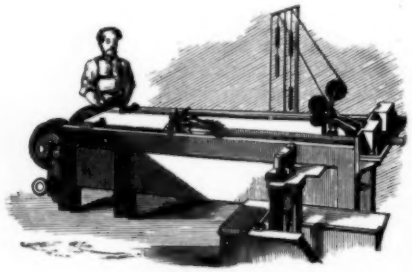
SHAPING THE INGOTS IN ROLLING-MILL.

As the ore is extracted, it is carried in small iron cars to the surface, and wheeled to the reduction-mills, where it is delivered through a chute provided with a sieve. The pieces that pass through the interstices of the sieve, which are three inches square, go directly into the receiving-bin below, while the coarser pieces are diverted into the rock-crusher and broken before they are restored to their smaller fellows. From the bin the ore is fed to the "stamps," by which it is pulverized in immense iron boxes and turned, by the addition of water, into a seething, milky-looking liquid. The next stage is reached in the amalgamating-room, where it is deposited in the shape of a fine, glittering sand, and put into pans which are heated by steam. When it has been steamed and ground for two hours and a half, some salt, sulphate of copper, and quicksilver, are mixed with the pulp which the ore has become; and at the end of five hours the ore and the quicksilver are drawn off into settling-pans. The silver separates from the ore in the amalgamating-pans, being changed from a chloride and sulphuret to a metallic form by the action of the salt and sulphate of copper; and it then unites with the quicksilver, which clings to it with the tenacity of a very poor relation. The object of all this grinding and washing is the removal of the earth, some of which remains, and is not



ROLLING-MILL

finally eliminated until the metal is passed through a bag of heavy canvas, suspended in a strong box with an iron lid. While it is thus inclosed, much of the



DRAWING-BENCH

superfluous quicksilver flows away from it, and, as a pasty mass, it is transferred into an hydraulic strainer—a cylindrical iron vessel, in which a pressure of one hundred and fifty pounds to the square inch is applied to it. Three-fourths of the mass are still quicksilver, and it is next put into a retort, where the application of heat drives out the mercury and leaves the boiling silver, which is moulded into bars or bricks, almost ready for coinage into dollars.

We are premising that the reader is not a technical person. If he is making a serious study of metallurgy, and would care for the details and ingenious illustrations that so eminent a specialist as Professor Raymond would give in a lecture to a class, he is probably frittering away his valuable time in listening to us. We anticipate that our audience is content with generalizations in a measure, having no desire for the mathematic minutiæ which make up the business of the assayist, whose scales are so poetically sensitive that they record the infinitesimal weight of a lead-pencil's stroke upon a scrap of paper; and we will leave out of our description the intermediate stages through which the bullion-bricks of the Comstock pass before they reach the Mint. As they are cast in Virginia City they contain a small proportion of gold, which is afterward extracted, and, when the remaining silver has been alloyed with copper, it is recast in the shape of ingots. The ingots are about twelve inches long, half an inch thick, and two and a half inches broad, being beveled at one end to facilitate their passage through the rollers; the rollers are—but we had better preface our account of the



CUTTING THE PLANCHETS.

processes and machinery with a few words about the Mint itself, which is now established in a marble structure in Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, of no little historic interest.

It was founded very nearly one hundred years ago, and in it was coined the first money used in the United States. Until 1816 all the work was done by hand or horse power; the building was guarded by watch-dogs, and the artisans were supplied with plentiful quantities of liquor as a fatigue-ration, the ancient and simple-minded citizens looking upon them with especial favor. The earliest director was appointed by Washington. The original copper cents were made in 1793, the silver dollars in 1794, and the gold eagles in 1795. Both the metal and machinery were imported; but in coining, as in many other things, the American has made such progress within the century that the implements of his own construction are now superior to the models after which they are patterned.

The casual visitor is welcomed from 9 A. M. until noon, and is taken in hand by polite and garrulous ushers, who in common with all the other employés bear themselves with the dignity that befits persons living in such close contact with enormous wealth. "I've seen five hundred and fifty million dollars go in and out of this place," said one of the employés as he led us into a dimly-lighted vault, where the pale bricks of silver were piled from roof to ceiling—"five hundred and fifty million dollars in twenty-eight years," he repeated, with particular gusto; and at the statement our fancy immediately took a wild flight among the enchanting possibilities of such treasure, for when Mammon mounts Pegasus no adolescent Muse can career through realms so luminous and varicolored as this metallic deity, who is worshiped and despised, courted and reviled, by the best and worst of men. The very contemplation of so immense a sum was dazzling to the imagination. It was the aggregate fortune of five hundred millionaires, the income of scores of thrones and the value of a state! What a Protean influence it must have exercised!—corrupting and sustaining how many lives; paying the scant wages of the ten-hour laborer, and sufficing for the extravagance of princely spendthrift; carrying happiness with it now, and then capriciously destroying the beneficiary; seducing the virtuous and breeding sedition among the honest—forever doing good and harm by fickle strokes; forever indispensable and forever al-



ADJUSTING.

luring. In one of his clever essays, Junius Henri Browne says with Emersonian sententiousness: "Cash is the cause and consequence of civilization, the measure of its breadth, and the plummet of its profundity. Every true ideal must rest on the real, and the real to-day is the coinage of the mint." The contents of the little vault had probably left deeper marks on the world than all the books written and the sermons preached during the twenty-eight years of the custodian's service.



MILLING.

In passing through the deposit-room all the metal is carefully weighed. The largest scale, with a ponderous beam and huge trays, combines extreme delicacy with its strength, and balances from six thousand ounces to the one-hundredth part of an ounce; another scale tells three thousand ounces at a time, and a third tells three hundred ounces. They are adjusted several times a week, erected on solid masonry, and are true to a grain. Having been weighed, the silver is carried to the melting-room, where it is mixed with copper, in order to give it sufficient hardness to endure the friction of constant handling, and melted in stone crucibles, heated to 1,800° by charcoal-fires. This heat is so intense that the workmen must protect their hands and arms by gloves and gauntlets. The stone crucibles are placed within others of plumbago, in order to insure them against breaking. Reduced to a molten fluid, the metal is now poured into iron moulds, whence it emerges in the form of ingots, which are transferred to rolling-mills which shape them by a rapid process of attenuation into long, narrow slips.

The rolling-mills show, in their shining surfaces, the care that a good mechanic always bestows upon his implements; they are worked by an engine of eighty horse-power, and each one has a capacity for running two hundred ingots an hour. A small dial with a crank attached is used in regulating the space between the two rollers, which can be so reduced that on ordinary visiting-card passed between them would crumble into powder. The noise is, in the neighborhood of the mills, deafening, and the pistons rising and falling, the fly-wheels spinning, the shafting smoothly revolving, seem to hedge us into a dangerous web, and our caution is kept in full activity. The silver is strewed about in abundance—in strips of various lengths and degrees of thickness, in angular fragments, and in the wedge-like ingots, that have as yet little of the lustrous whiteness of the coin into which they are soon to be converted. But with the abundance there is a frugality, which keeps account of every grain and saves even the vaporized atoms. In the melting-room the floor is covered with a portable iron grating, to prevent the lodgment and loss of the specks which become separated from the mass as it is being poured into the moulds; the bricks of the furnace are changed once a month, their soot being preserved for what it contains; the sweepings of the benches, roofs, and walls, are all counted as valuable; and the water in which certain of the laborers wash their hands is carefully filtered. There is a general and more thorough sweeping and washing annually, and the result of the precious metals gathered in invisible particles, mixed with dust and other refuse, is sometimes from twenty to thirty-five thousand dollars. A church looms over the building, and one year a shrewd director took it into his head that some of the volatilized silver had been deposited on the sanctuary's roof—a surmise which proved to be correct, and led to the discovery of several hundred dollars' worth. Some loss is inevitable, but by the great care taken, the checks put upon dishonesty, and the scientific thriftiness, it is very small, and is likely to decrease every year. The moralist

sees many analogies to eloquently enlarge upon, and the modern Sanford and Merton find a most edifying code of ethics exemplified in the mechanical processes of the coiner.

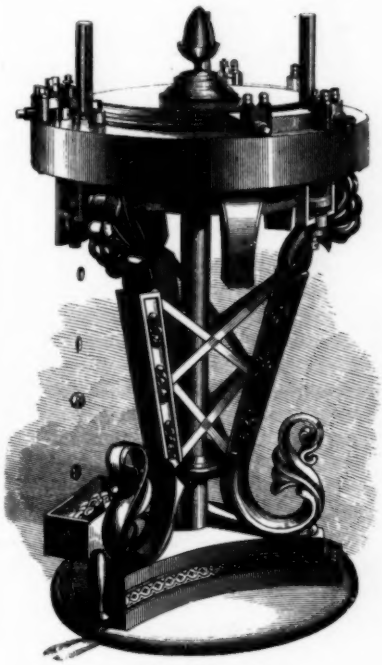
As we stood before one of the mills several little wagon-loads of ingots arrived ; the beveled ends were fed to the rollers, and, disappearing at one side of the machine, they reappeared at the other lengthened and increased in width ; they were put through thirteen times, the rollers being brought nearer together for the successive passages, and at the end of the operation they were transformed into ribbons several feet long, elastic and as thick as a dollar. Between the rollings they were put into furnaces and heated to incandescence for twenty minutes, for, unless they had been thus annealed, the pressure of the mill would have broken them or made them too brittle for working.

Nicely gauged as the rollers are, the strips coming from them are not exactly even, and the irregularities in the surface are removed by the "drawing-bench," which stands in a corner of the room, and is one of the most interesting machines in the building. It is a long table, to one end of which something like an iron box is secured, and inside the box there are two perpendicular steel cylinders, about three inches high, firmly supported in a bed, which prevents them from bending or revolving. The silver slips are smeared with lard, and one by one they are put between the little cylinders, which are precisely as far apart as a dollar is thick. A curious little railway-carriage, with a strong pair of pincers fastened to it, runs up and down the table, and as the end of a slip projects from the cylinders, the carriage approaches it, grasps it with the pincers, and starts off in an opposite direction with it. When the whole length has been drawn through, the strain of the pincers ceases, the slip is released, and the carriage returns to the cylinders for another slip, with which it repeats the operation. The unerring motion of this little vehicle as it makes its journeys up and down the table, and the tenacity of its grip, invariably evoke admiring adjectives from the lips of the children who watch it.

It is operated as follows: Having closed the pincers upon the slip by touching a pedal-board as it projects from the cylinders, the workman in charge presses another pedal-board, which forces down a strong hook at the farther end of the carriage. The hook catches a link of an endless chain running under the table, and, as this draws the carriage away, the slip must follow until its whole length has felt the embrace of the cylinders, which equalizes its consistency. The pincers then relax, and in doing so they release the hook, and the carriage returns to the cylinders, being drawn thereto by a cord running over a wheel at the head of the table, and attached to combination-weights on the wall beyond.

The silver now presents a sorry appearance: the lard that besmears it is viscid and dark, it has no brilliancy, and the polished steel of the machinery looks incomparably superior to it. But when it has been washed in warm water it is less offensive to the touch, although it is still dull and "spotty"—a word borrowed from the jargon of art-critics, who share it with dog-fanciers. From this stage the ingot, which, notwithstanding its extreme attenuation, has borne some resemblance to its original self in the slip, is lost in the *planchet*—not the *planchet* that derives suppositive spiritual impulse from the fingers put upon it, and tremulously records nothing in particular upon the paper exposed to it, but the disk of the coin.

Near the "drawing-bench" there is a row of presses, through which the slips are run by an experienced operative, and cut into the circular form, provided that they prove to be within a fraction of the proper thickness. The first disk cut out of every slip is weighed ; if it is light, the slip is condemned and sent to be remelted, but if it is the exact weight or a little heavier, it is passed, a file being used to reduce its proportions subsequently in event of its exceeding the standard. The presses are as convenient for cutting a dime as for an eagle, the punches being movable, and as adaptable to circumstances as the impecunious friend who, pleading for fifty cents, and finding his request granted, says, "Make it a dollar." The motion is obtained by an



MILLING-MACHINE.

eccentric wheel, and, as the *planchets* are cut, they fall with a pleasant jingle into a box below, leaving the perforated remnant of the slip to be folded and remelted. About eight hundred *planchets* are cut

from a slip worth eleven hundred dollars as it first passes under the punch, but, when the remains are recast in the ingot, they fully make up the other three hundred.

From the presses the *planchets* are taken to the adjusting-rooms on one of the upper floors, where three or four score women are seated at long benches, each one having a delicate pair of assay-scales before her—scales that are sensitive to one-sixteenth of a grain, and are as true as the truest lover who ever plighted troth. There are young and fair girls among these operatives, serious, middle-aged spinsters, and gray-haired matrons. There are gayly-colored dresses, coquettish arrangements of ribbons, and smiling faces; and there are dresses which show poverty, and faces which are care-worn. The differences of disposition are subordinated to the collective industry, which admits of no conversation, and demands constant application. Here sits a pretty maiden, whose eyes are demurely fixed upon her scales. She takes a *planchet* from a dish, and puts it upon one of the trays; it happens to exactly balance the standard weight of a dollar upon the opposite tray, and it becomes a test of the other *planchets*, which are weighed one by one. Those that are within a grain and a half of the legal weight are acceptable; those that are more than a grain and a half short of the full weight are condemned to be remelted; and those that are more than a grain and a half in excess are filed down. A gentle stroke of the file is usually sufficient to bring the latter within the limit, although the teeth are exceedingly fine, and no justice upon the wool-sack was ever more precise than this mild-eyed maid with the blush-rose in her hair.



ANNEALING THE PLANCHETS.

Having passed through the gentle hands of the adjusters with proper credentials, the rectified *planchets* become "blanks," which, though it is not so pretty a name as the former, means that they have

been promoted one degree nearer to the peerage of the finished coin. They are still dull and flat, however, and the next change in their condition comes with the milling. The reader, who no doubt has handled many thousands of silver dollars, and, let us hope, will have complacent intimacy with many thousands more, may have observed a rim around the edge, the object of which has not particularly struck him. It is intended to prevent the effacement of the design in the wear and friction of its daily use, and is produced by a machine invented by a former *attaché* of the Mint. The disks of silver are fed to the milling-machine (milling being the process that raises the rims) through a vertical brass tube, which is attended to by a sedate dame, who cleverly takes as many as twenty of them in her hand at a time, and deposits the whole column in the orifice. At the bottom of the tube they are driven into narrow grooves in a revolving wheel and an opposite segment; the segment is on the same curve as the wheel, and between one and the other their edges are forced up the fraction of an inch.

Rolled, annealed, cut, adjusted, milled, and promoted, they are carried into a stifling apartment, at one side of which there is a row of furnaces; at the other side there are shallow vats exhaling vapors that affect the lungs as a dose of needle-points might do. Here they are annealed again in iron pans, and dipped into a bath of sulphuric acid and water, which technically "pickles" them. We became acquainted with a rod in pickle on the occasion of some youthful escapades, and pickles in the form of an appetizing condiment have been associated with many luncheons of later years; but a pickled dollar was a novelty reserved for our first visit to the Mint. The pickling is a cleansing and otherwise beneficial process; it whitens and brightens the blanks; and, when they have been washed in warm water, they look something like the coins they are to become.

Taken moist from the bath, they are dried and polished in a revolving drum or cylinder partly filled with basswood-dust and heated by steam. The basswood-dust is used in preference to any other, as it contains no sap or pitch; and, when the blanks have been tossed about in it for a short time, a small door in the drum is opened, and they fall into a circular sieve, the revolutions of which sift out the particles of wood, and leave them white and lustrous.



COINING-PRESS.

They are now ready to receive the impression which makes coin of them. The die used is first designed in wax; a brass cast is taken from the wax, and, though it is six times as large, it is reduced on steel to the size of the coin by a wonderful machine called the transfer-lathe. When the die comes from the lathe it is finished by hand and hardened, and duplicates are made of it, the original not being used on the press.

The coining-press is a massive engine of mirror-like steel and brass. It is fed with the blanks through a vertical brass tube in the same way that the milling-machine is fed, and a very charming young lady satisfies its appetite, which demands

eighty blanks a minute. Its power is that of the toggle-joint, and it moves with the soniferous rock of a baby-giant's cradle. As the blanks reach the bottom of the tube they are seized singly by a pair of steel feeders similar in motion to human fingers and thumbs, and "carried forward and lodged in the collar between the upper and lower dies. At the same moment the lever is descending, and, by the time the *planchet* is in position, the toggle-joint, brought into a vertical position, imparts to the piece a pressure which, within the narrow limits of its motion, is almost incalculable. The immediate relaxation of the joint causes the upper die to be lifted, when the feeders, coming up with a second *planchet*, push away the one already coined. The *planchet*, before being struck, is slightly less in diameter than the steel ring or collar into which it drops; but the pressure upon the dies causes the piece to expand into the collar, and takes from it the reeding or fluting of its edge." The tinkle of the falling coins and the measured swing of the machine are musical, and would interweave with other instruments in a miser's symphony. Do they awaken far-reaching thoughts in the girl who fills the tube, and sees the insensate press casting off the coins at the rate of more than fourteen millions a year? Every time she hears the tinkle in the box near her feet an inestimably powerful agent is entering the world, and from the machine to which she is so carefully ministering come the multifarious evil and good of all civilization.

SOUTH CAROLINA RELICS.

"Life and thought have gone away
Side by side, .
Leaving door and windows wide."

THE tourist, traveling through South Carolina by the Northeastern Railroad, passes, when thirty miles from Charleston, within two miles of a relic of colonial days. Biggin Church, as it is familiarly known, or St. John's Church, Berkeley, as the old parochial records term it, stands on a site elevated some fifteen or twenty feet above the neighboring swamp, bearing in the original title-deeds the Indian name of Tippicop Haw Hill. It was in early days the church of a parish whose ecclesiastical rights, received from the Church of England, extended over an area of country equal to the half of Rhode Island. The parish was established in 1706, and the church built in 1710. The reader sees, therefore, in the sketch which accompanies this article, "the counterfeit presentment" of walls which have borne the accumulated accidents of a hundred and sixty-seven years. The view here given (southwest) is not the best; quite a pretty picture might be taken from the north side—for here the church is literally covered, from base of wall to ridge of roof, with ivy and flowering vines—but the dense growth of the churchyard shuts out the view.

It is not, however, the antiquity of Biggin but its historical character which will, I think, repay a half-hour's study. For, worn and ugly as these old walls are, they have looked down on scenes within and around them which, could they be but faithfully portrayed, would yield valuable insight into the ways of eventful times.

Think of standing at the corner of Old Biggin on Whitsunday, 1712, to see the parishioners assemble for service! From our position we command a view of the approach by three roads running north, south, and west. The western road crosses the swamp and Biggin Creek (the beginning of Cooper River) to the infant settlement, one mile away, which is to be the future town of Monck's Corner. (Let the traveler remark that this is not the dreary little station of the same name at which the train stops on the Northeastern Railroad.) That dark object which you see far down the white, sandy road to the southward is the Rev. Robert Maule, A. M., the rector of the parish. He only arrived in the colony five years ago, and his dress is still in accordance with the clerical habit of the old country. You observe, as he draws nearer, the long cassock and bands, black-silk stockings, and large, buckled shoes—a style of dress utterly inadequate to protect the wearer from the swarms of mosquitoes which infest this locality. Straggling groups of country-folk quickly follow the rector's arrival, coming up by the various roads. Many of these poor people have walked ten or fifteen miles to be here. "The changes and chances" which hang upon life in a strange, wild land make grave men and women; and, besides the spiritual help which they seek to-day, the services of the church will awaken a thousand tender and sad memories of other days—images of old home in England which they have left forever. Next, horsemen begin to come up north, south, and west, in parties of two and three. These are the young cavaliers of the parish whose fathers, many of them adherents of the Stuarts, went into voluntary exile on the accession of the house of Hanover. These new-comers are mounted on as pretty bits of blood as England herself could show; for here, where at any moment life or death may depend on the speed and endurance of a horse, high-breeding is no longer a pastime but a study. These horses are not very pretty according to the conventional ideas of equine beauty—they are certainly very unlike the great beasts which rear their huge bulks in monumental marble as model war-horses—and yet, there is something about their lithe, hard limbs and delicate build—their small, bony heads, deeply folded, mobile nostrils; a certain consciousness of power in the large, prominent, gentle eyes, which should make a

prudent man beware of adverse criticism. Among these groups of riders it is easy to single out the ruddy-complexioned, fair-haired, robust Englishmen, and the slight, wiry figures, swarth, nervous faces, and dark, flashing eyes of the French Huguenots—themselves willing exiles from their native land. Carolina owes much of her high sense of honor and proverbial courtesy to these same refugees from France.

And, now, the families begin to arrive: handsome, richly-dressed dames seated in old-fashioned chaises, in most cases with the driver perched on the splinter-bar, but in some instances, where long distances have been traveled, the chaise-horse is led by a negro outrider. That stately, fine-looking gentleman on the chestnut horse is Colonel Thomas Broughton. See how he bends in his saddle as he lifts his three-cornered hat in salute to the rector! He is dressed in a blue coat with metal buttons, buff waistcoat, spotless buckskin riding-breeches, and top-boots. The old chronicles call him "a worthy gentleman and serious Christian." But look at that little maiden in a gay stomacher, prodigious panniers, silk stockings, and high-heeled, dainty, buckled shoes! Mounted on a pillion behind her father, for all she looks so quiet and nun-like, her bright, quick eyes are taking in every noticeable feature of the scene to be treasured up for future reference. And just see, too, those quaint little fellows, boys of nine and eleven (their life-size portraits as they then appeared are yet to be seen in the parish), in embroidered coats, knee-breeches, and the inevitable buckled shoes. They are mounted on two Chickasaw ponies, easily recognizable as the germ of the much-enduring, indomitable Marshtacky of Carolina.



BIGGIN CHURCH.

(The Chickasaw horse is a descendant of those brought to Florida by the Spaniards. Escaping to the wilderness, great numbers of these horses ranged wild about the "Apalache old field," in the western part of South Carolina. The amazing pluck and untiring qualities of their progeny speak volumes for the old Barbary blood that was originally in them.)

But look, there is a sight to see! Up through the swamp by the western road, with postilion and outriders, comes a coach-and-four—a huge, clumsy, yellow thing which must have been brought from England in sections: on the panels are painted the arms and crest of an English baronet. Let me introduce you to Sir John Colleton of Fairlawn, St. John's, Berkeley. You can scarcely help smiling when he remarks on the heat of the day; for, burly Englishman that he is, how could he be otherwise than warm in that gold-embroidered red coat, knee-breeches, and cocked-hat? The only cool-looking parts about him are the broad expanse of front ruffles, white-silk stockings, and low, gold-buckled shoes. But it is not ostentation in Sir John—this is a high day in the church, and he wishes to render it due honor. Good churchmen, in fact, were all the Colletons; one of their number gave to St. John's a valuable rice-plantation as a glebe, which, even now, in times of average prosperity, is worth annually from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars.

The service over, the next place of rendezvous is Biggin Spring—what comfort, refreshment, delight, have those bright waters not given the weary!

Riding in this climate is warm work and dry; Sir John asks Colonel Broughton to grace him in a cup; the colonel, with all the stateliness of the "saintly days of yore," bows a graceful acceptance, and a case bottle, taken from the profound depths of the yellow coach, supplies material in Jamaica rum for the pledge of friendship (a friend, who is curious on these points, tells me that this cup, taken on the meridian, was called "the *enabler*," because, though

adding to animal heat, it imparted equanimity of temper and great powers of endurance). It is but fair to state, however, that in those early days a superstition was current to the effect that the waters of this spring were unwholesome, except to very young persons, unless qualified with "a few drops of spirits." But, that this scene may not be intolerable to the water-drinker, just look at those young fellows on the edge of the swamp! They are gathering broad hickory-leaves to form into cups for those little maidens who so demurely wait their service. Nothing so sweet as these cups ever left the hands of Benvenuto Cellini.

But these peaceful scenes of religious and social life are soon to give place to events of dread and terror. In 1715 the Bloody Stick was sent throughout all the Indian tribes, from St. Augustine to Cape Fair, as the signal for a general uprising to exterminate the entire white population.

With our friends of St. John's, occupying a frontier position, it was now "*Sauve qui peut!*" Never was more dire need for blooded horses and bold riders, and never was the call so made more nobly answered. The escape of a single negro from a fort in the adjoining parish of St. Stephen brought news of the surprise, capture, and slaughter, of the garrison. Providentially, the Indians paused that night to hold a feast over their victory, and swift couriers went out in all directions to warn the scattered inhabitants of St. John's. How well they did their work is to be seen in the fact that tradition does not record the loss of a single family during these terrible days.

The parishioners, with their rector, took refuge some five or six miles below Biggin, within the walls of Mulberry Castle. This fortress, built entirely of English brick and still perfect in preservation, crowns a bold height on the right bank of the Cooper River, whence is easy access by shipping to Charleston. Its picturesque situation, especially from the river-view, and its historical associations, will yet make it a place of great attraction and interest to travelers in the South. On the outer corner of each of the southern bastions is now planted a small, old-fashioned cannon—planted (not in military phrase), but muzzle downward, to protect the masonry from careless drivers. From the southern porch of the castle, we command a view of the river, with its many windings, for ten or twelve miles, its margins beautified with the soft green of the rice-fields, and its banks dotted at intervals with homesteads. But to return to the troubles of 1715. There was a parishioner of St. John's who, in all that time, refused to fly. A man named Donovan had built himself a close log-house in the upper part of the parish, and, manning it with mastiff-dogs, resolutely stood his ground—a notable instance of British pluck—forty miles away from any other white face. He kept his dogs up by day and loosed them at night. When they killed an Indian he put them on short rations until (*horresco referens*) they had consumed the body. Whereupon, we are told, they soon learned to regard live Indians as their legitimate game.

But there was another, of those days, cast likewise in an heroic mould—we have just seen him in cassock and bands at Old Biggin—the Rev. Robert Maule. When he took charge of this extensive parish, with a widely-scattered population, numbering six hundred and ten whites, not to speak of Indians and negroes, for a considerable time he did all of his work on foot. Think of it, your reverence of 1878! —and that in a climate imperatively demanding the husbandry of every energy, if you would escape sickness and death. When his parishioners saw the stuff he was made of, they presented him with a horse. Upon the Indian outbreak, when he might easily have claimed a respite and have returned to England on full pay, he chose rather to follow his people into garrison. Here he baptized their children, visited their sick and wounded, and buried their dead; besides preaching every Sunday and reading prayers twice every day of the week. In a letter written at this time, he says of his people: "Considering that I have hitherto lived with them in their prosperity, I could not in conscience desert them in times of danger and distress." After four months of this severe duty in a crowded garrison, he returned to his parish, but only to die, "beloved and lamented." He must have been a lonely man, for he made the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts his residuary legatees. What a romance might be woven from such a life!

A sad fatality attended in early times the clergy of St. John's. Of the eight rectors in charge, between its foundation and the war of the Revolution, three died within a few months after their arrival, one was obliged to resign in less than a year on account of his "contentious disposition," and a fifth because of broken health within fifteen months. Nevertheless, Old Biggin was kept pretty well supplied during vacant intervals, by the clergy of Charleston, whose pay was ten pounds currency for each service rendered.

How Biggin, with her special aptitude for it, escaped burning in the war of 1715, nobody knows; but escape she did, though the Indians were all around her for months.

The earliest parochial records now remaining are before me, bearing date 1731. The vestry-roll for this year was as follows: Paul de St. Julien, John Harleston, Thomas Broughton, John Gibbs, Thomas Cordes, James Le Bass, John Colleton, Nathaniel Broughton, H. Butler. This list affords a pretty fair index to the relative proportion of English and French settlers in the parish. Most of the items in the vestry-book of this period possess an interest purely local—some are historical, others (to young America at least) genuinely antique. For example, we read that in 1735 "y^e^ Vestry, taking into consideration that there is a great necessity for some Repairs about y^e^ Church, have desired the wardens to view the same." Under date of July 7, 1748, we find the following entry, signed by the vestry: "This day was delivered to us (for which we gave our receipt to Madam Damaris Ravenel) a Silver Cup Gilt with a case belonging to it, wch Cup was

brought to this Country by the Reverend Mr. Lesson, formerly minister of the French congregation in this Province, and the said Cup was formerly used by the Protestants in France before the Persecution, & was delivered to the Church Wardens of this parish." (This cup, together with the entire silver service of the parish, was carefully hidden away near the close of the late war; but its place of concealment was discovered and the plate taken as treasure-trove.)



MULBERRY CASTLE.

In a letter dated September 25, 1754, the Rev. Mr. Durand, then rector of the parish, writes thus to the vestry concerning a certain Mr. Anderson, who, it seems, had circulated reports touching the orthodoxy of Mr. Durand: "I have been traduced and blackened with the vilest Calumny, and for several successive Sundays been continually laughed at by this daring Libeller while preaching the Word of God. Gentn, if it be not agreeable to the parish to prosecute Mr. Anderson, unless he recants every syllable of his Libel and asks my pardon in print for his Base Slander, besides Reimbursing £50 currency Expense I have been already at on this occasion, I am fully determined to quit the parish."

Mr. Durand remained, so we suppose Mr. Anderson recanted and paid expenses.

In 1754 appears for the first time the name of William Moultrie on the vestry-roll.

In 1755 Biggin Church was accidentally burned. How much she minded this may be seen from the fact that, at a survey of the walls made a few days after, "it was found that Two hundred pounds was wanting to cover in the church—Emanuel Giggerman was agreed with to mend the Brick Work at the Church at seventy pounds in full of all charges."

The following entry is made in 1756: "Drew an Order on the Treasurer to George June for providing for seven of the Acadians, from 31st of July to 22d October Inclusive, being forty-two pounds." The Acadians were a remnant of the early French settlers of Nova Scotia, who were distributed by Great Britain among her colonies—fifteen hundred having been sent to Charleston, South Carolina.

The vestry were very much troubled during the following year by the presence of one John Knight. It was found that for some reason nobody would board Knight under fifty pounds, when forty pounds was the usual rate. In November, however, Mr. James Ravenel, "Chh. Warden," "Reported to the Vestry that the said Knight was willing to go off the province, if the Vestry would pay his passage:—it was agreed that Mr. Ravenel should provide him a passage in the Steerage of some Vessel and lay in some necessaries for him which the Vestry would see paid and, in the meantime, board him on the best terms he could." Among the vestrymen for 1761 appears a name celebrated for its benefactions to the parish—the name of Elias Ball. A large house in complete repair, with rich adjoining lands, as a rectory, attest the piety and generosity of this family.

But there are stormy times ahead of Old Biggin. She caught the first murmur of the gale when, in 1780, "in the dead waste and middle of the night" came borne across from Monck's Corner the clash of swords and scattering shots and shouts of charging cavalry. It was Tarleton surprising Colonel Washington, in which affair the Americans lost twenty-five men and thirty horses. The troopers who escaped lay for days in the adjoining swamp. I wish I could show you the kind of place where the poor fellows slept. It lies only a few hundred yards from the church, and here you would see no dense, monotonous canebrake, such as on the Santee would, perhaps, occupy you four hours to pass in a boat; but a scene, so far as I know, belonging in its *tout ensemble* only to Cooper River. Fancy a level space,

liable at all points to the overflowing of freshets, with no undergrowth but a dense carpet, three feet deep, of ferns, dwarf-palms, young canes, and bright-leaved wampee. A sportsman entering this swamp would involuntarily exclaim, "What a place for woodcock!" And so it is in December. But here, in midsummer, vistas stretch out unobstructed for a hundred yards or more, through columns that would grace any temple on earth. The white-marbled trunks of the beech and sycamore, the rich brown of the cypress and pine, the granite-gray of the poplar and starry-leaved sweet-gum, rear bare shafts upward for fifty or sixty feet, and, covered and bound together by a network of vines, spread out, mingling their branches in such a wealth of foliage that the light cast below is only like that which you may see when, on a cloudless day, far away from any taint of land, you look horizontally through some huge ocean-roller and see the penciled light change in a moment, with a metallic shimmer, from green to blue and then again to green. In such a place, think how the fiery crimson *Lobelia cardinalis* looks under some low-hanging myrtle, or what revelations the water-lily makes, with white leaves spread out on the surface of the lagoon, black and still as polished ebony! But let us not linger here too long.

In 1781 the period of British rule in South Carolina was drawing to a close. In the summer of that year, Colonel Coates, of the royal army, took possession of our old church as a *point d'appui* to Charleston. Wade Hampton, however, with a small following, passed down the peninsula, captured the picket guarding the only avenue of approach to the city, and flashed his sword so close to the face of the commandant thereof as to make him up drawbridge and man the walls. Satisfied with this little piece of pleasantry, Hampton set himself to serious work by moving upon Coates, stopping long enough at Strawberry Ferry, eight miles below Biggin, to burn four of the enemy's vessels, laden with valuable stores, and capture fifty prisoners. Meanwhile, Sumpter had swooped down on Coates; but finding the British commander so strongly posted in and around the church as only to be dislodged by artillery, he determined, after some skirmishing, to await further developments, the enemy at the same time by skillful manœuvres keeping him for one entire afternoon in constant expectation of an attack. Marion joined Sumpter that night; but, exhausted by a long march and deceived by the reports of Coates's movements, he gave his weary rangers rest. If the sharp eyes of the "Swamp Fox" and his scouts had been on duty that night, how different might have been the issue!

Coates had no idea of giving battle; his object was to fall back on Charleston; and this, it must be owned, he effected with admirable tact. From Biggin Church there are two roads leading to the city—one, which I have already described, to the westward, crossing the head-waters of Cooper River, here a shallow stream always fordable; the other trending southward, crossing Watboo Creek, where there is no ford, a mile below the church. Coates selected the latter route — not, it would seem, as Simms surmises, because the former, though shorter, was hot and heavy — but because Watboo Creek, with a broken bridge, would offer a formidable obstacle to a pursuing foe. The result proved the wisdom of the choice. The British colonel that night, having gathered in the church all the military stores which he could not transport in a rapid march, applied the torch and silently stole away.

The first intimation of this movement was made by Old Biggin herself, when, at three o'clock in the morning, the drowsy sentries of the American army saw the flames leap through the roof. Fortunately, in their haste the British had neglected to throw down the sleepers of the bridge over Watboo, and a crossing, after some delay, was effected. Lee ("Light-Horse Harry") with the Legion and Hampton with the Carolina cavalry led the chase; but the enemy had the start of them by hours, and the entire width of the parish was traversed before they were overtaken. Then, just over the confines of St. John's, Hampton and Lee rode into the rear-guard, captured them without a struggle, and dashed on to the attack of the main body. Again, however, the generalship of Coates shone conspicuously; he had put another stream without a ford between himself and his pursuers. When Lee reached him he was busy in tearing up Quinby Bridge. Captain Armstrong, of the Legion, followed by five men, leaped his horse over the broken part of the bridge and charged through a considerable part of the British lines, returning with the loss of only two troopers. Lee wisely withdrew, however, from any further attempt until the remainder of the American army could come up; but by that time Coates had secured himself in a position from which it would have been too costly to drive him, and our friends had to content themselves with the prisoners taken and the entire baggage-train of the enemy—no mean prize for a ride of seventeen miles.

But Old Biggin! She is naturally indignant at the treatment received. Accidental burnings lie in the course of Nature; but here was intentional wrong—here was a ruinous purpose. Her gable-ends, which were so picturesque, are gone; her eastern wall is shattered by some terrible agency, a powder-blast, in all likelihood, and, *stat nominis umbra*, she is a wreck. In this condition the church remained for many years after the War of '76—say, until 1808.

Meanwhile Moultrie, Marion, and the stainless patriot Henry Laurens, have each served as vestrymen or wardens of the parish.

We have no record of the meeting at which it was resolved to restore Old Biggin, save that General Moultrie was appointed on the building committee. His reputation and acknowledged authority must have given him in it a controlling voice. But he—gallant soldier and honest gentleman—what did he know of church-building? His tastes and training lay in the direction of forts! You see the result. In 1800 it was resolved, under the auspices of the general, to receive "Proposals for repairing the Half of the Old Church by taking down the

Easternmost part of the Wall and repairing the West End of it with the old materials, with Hip roof," etc., the gables being discarded. So, whether Biggin is a fort converted into a church, or a church so demoralized as to have become a fort, it might puzzle an architect to determine.

But you, dear reader, will look kindly upon it as on a war-scarred veteran whose wounds have been tended by one who was himself also trained in the rough school of war.

While we speak of General Moultrie—a man whose high sense of honor and rigid adherence to the principles of justice and truth deserve more admiration than even his soldierly abilities—it would not be out of place to quote a letter of his which, while furnishing us an interesting picture of this section of country at the close of the war, has never before been published:

"AT GOVERNOUR'S HOUSE, *August* 17, 1782.

". . . . This is the first opportunity I have had since I arrived at this place; I have been longing to hear from you. I was under some apprehension lest your fever should return; I hope it has not, and that you are all hearty and well, and are preparing yourselves to go into Town, though, I think, you will view your Turkies first. From all the accounts we can gather, the enemy will embark soon after the Equanox; all the Tories were to have sailed a few days ago, but have obtained permission to remain 'till after the Equanox. The fleet is not yet arrived to take off the British troops, though signals have been made two days last week. 'Tis supposed from these N. E. winds they have fallen to leeward of Bar; their troops have all their baggage and stores on board, and but one piece of Cannon mounted anywhere; many people come out every day to Mrs. Izard's to meet their friends, and take their final leave. . . . Your sister Peronneau is to go with her husband; I have sent yours and Mrs. Harleston's love to her with your best wishes. Mrs. Elliott informed me that all our effects are still safe; the crimson-bottomed chairs are up at Mrs. Baker's with Bella's Desk; she has herself at the Hutt Betsey's box of China; your Commode and the trunk of Curtains, &c., were left with your sister Peronneau, with the little screen, who promised to take care of them. . . . Since the British troops have been preparing to go away, a great quantity of goods have arrived from England; some say to the amount of £250,000 st'g. Wm. Smith, the principle merchant (who died about ten days ago), had £15,000 to his share come in; most of the merchants are to remain in Town when the troops go away, so that we shall abound in goods. Our Troops are beginning to be very sickly; 'tis feared Gen'l. Gist will die soon. Olyphant [Director of Hospitals U. S. A.] has little hopes of him. Poor Mrs. Heyward died in Philadelphia. . . . Mrs. Brewton has agreed to stay and take care of that distressed house, full of children; happy for them they have so good a guardian; Heyward is coming on himself, and all the other Carolinians. . . . I had a moving, pleasing scene *on* my arrival at North Hampton; it being Sunday, the Negroes were all dressed in their best, and rec'd me with the greatest gratitude and joy that can be imagined, every one shaking hands with tears of joy; Nay old Peggy (a new Negro) [i. e., lately come from Africa] came and kissed my cheeks, and, to close the scene, old Boston and Simon came hand in hand, singing their Country song, with the greatest demonstrations of joy; and one and all thanking God that I was come back again; every one bringing an offering of some little thing or other. They could not quit the house, for some hours hanging all around the court-yard's fence, silent and pensive, frequently turning their eyes towards me, and with a loud exclamation of 'Ky!' and 'thank God! my masser was come!' I assure I was obliged frequently to leave them and retire to the chamber to wipe my eyes. Grimkie was so affected that he could not restrain from taking out his handkerchief. Seul also can tell you of his feelings on the occasion. I found everything in much better order than I expected. The Garden in tolerable order; the Orchard in very good order with a number of fine young trees, all our beds safe that were left there. I defer saying more 'till I have the happiness to see you. . . .

"I am . . . .

"Your affectionate . . . .

"WILL^M MOULTRIE."

Old Biggin, true to her military record, must needs take a part, though a humble one, in the late war. General Potter, of the Federal army, encamped around her for several days in the spring of 1865, and left her dismantled. Since then the church has not been repaired, nor is ever likely to be. Strawberry Chapel, eight miles below Biggin, is now *de facto*, if not *de jure*, the parish-church. Built upon a bold height overlooking the river and the scene of Hampton's victory over the British, and nestling amid a grove of magnificent live-oaks, the site of this chapel has no equal for picturesque beauty in the South.

The vestry of St. John's, Berkeley, have vainly tried to secure Biggin Church from desecration by fastening the doors and windows; but these are invariably broken open by the idle or by those seeking shelter from the weather.

No service is now performed here save occasionally the ritual for the dead, and—

"The bat and owl repose
Where once the people knelt them,
And the high 'Te Deum' rose."

But few points of interest would attract the stranger in the churchyard. One, however, is the large subterranean vault of the Colleton family. This vault is securely sealed up; but a small section—which was, perhaps, an antechamber—lies exposed to view, in which, tradition tells us, three venerable parishioners of St. John's were confined for three days and nights by the British while Coates held the church. Their offense was that they had sons in the rebel army.

JET: HER FACE OR HER FORTUNE?

BY MRS. ANNIE EDWARDES,

AUTHOR OF "ARCHIE LOVELL," "A BLUE-STOCKING," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIFINE.

"MILADI! I give to miladi well-komm!" cries Herr Schmidt, in his broken English, as he rushes up to support Lady Austen's fingers with his arm.

Jet Conyngham bends eagerly forward, a presentiment, nearly akin to terror, contracting her heart.

"Bonsoir, M. le Propriétaire," begins miladi, in a harsh, jarring, falsetto voice; and, as she speaks, with a manner, I will not say foreign, but un-English, she gives a little imperial wave of her hand to the assembled crowd of servants.—"Ach, Karl, mein Freund"—in affected German accents—"wie geht es?—My suite, I trust, is ready for me, Mr. Secretary? Engagé par M. le Major. Exactly so. And I shall not have to wait for dinner? E pronto il pranzo?—Laurence" (looking back across her shoulder into the omnibus), "will you have the goodness to search upon the floor of the voiture? I miss one of my gloves. And I believe you will find the umbrellas standing in the farther corner."

Laurence!

Jet Conyngham's spirit sinks to zero.

"What! you do not see my glove?"—thus miladi, petulantly, when another half-minute has elapsed. "May I ask you to come out, and I will search myself?—Vallance look, do you say? Oh, dear, no—Vallance has her arms full."

The Reverend Laurence Biron, upon this, makes his appearance, horribly pale—or so Jet imagines—and with some subtile change in his whole demeanor that it would be hard to define.

"I really do not think the glove can be there—" he is beginning.

"The glove is there!" says miladi tartly.

Oh, the voice of this woman! Oh, her air of command! Jet Conyngham glances round at the knot of serving-people, and detects a barely-suppressed smile upon the face of each.

"Take my cloud!" (Mr. Biron disappears beneath yards and yards of diaphanous knitted scarlet.) "Hold Fifine!" (A ball of snapping white wool is deposited in Mr. Biron's arms.) "I will search myself!"

But the proprietor, secretary, the head-waiter, the subordinates, all contest for the honor of finding miladi's glove.

While they are thus engaged, Biron standing helpless with the shawl and lap-dog, miladi giving a series of impatient stamps upon the pavement, little Major Brett comes forward with a run.

"Lady Austen, a thousand welcomes to the Paradis! You received my last two telegrams, I hope?"

"So it *is* Lady Austen," whispers Jet. "I shall never wonder again at Mark's temper."

"And it *is* Mr. Biron. Jet, why does Lady Austen call him by his Christian name?"

Jet returns no answer.

"You do not know if my son is in Esterel, M. le Secrétaire?" goes on miladi, pointedly turning her back upon Laurence Biron. "He was to have met me here by appointment—indeed, he should have arrived an hour ago, by the afternoon train from Marseilles."

No, the secretary has not had the distinguished honor of receiving miladi's son. But there is yet the half-past seven Paris express; or it is possible M. Austen may have descended at some other hotel in the town.

"He has just passed the most glorious examination, Major Brett—the most glorious examination, has my son. India Civil Service—Commissioners of Roads and Forests. Mark came out first of ninety. I telegraphed two days ago inviting him to join me in the south before proceeding to Germany, where he will have to prosecute his studies for a year or more."

Major Brett is profuse in good wishes and congratulations.

"Talent! nothing like it nowadays. Talent is hereditary, my dear lady. All your really clever fellows have had gifted mothers."

Biron stands, moodily submitting to his burden, digesting, as best he may, the tidings that Lady Austen, with intentional abruptness, has conveyed to him.

For her to hold forth the olive-branch to young Mark is, Mr. Biron knows, a covert declaration of war against himself.

How soon shall the rupture become open?

How much has she heard of the truth respecting Jet Conyngham?

What deadliest reprisals may she not at this moment have on hand?

"Fifine, ma mie, ma moutonne!" says miladi, taking the dog from Biron's arm as though he were a lackey. "We are tired after our journey—n'est-ce pas, ma bibiche?—and must have our tea.—You would not believe, major, how the dear creature looks to me for her tea when she is tired. Alas! separated as circumstances have forced me to be from my son, l'enfant chéri de mon cœur, I find the affection even of a dumb creature precious.—Laurence, I shall be obliged by your seeing that my baggage is right—fourteen large pieces, two boxes belonging to Vallance, and the different wraps.—Ma mignonne, mon amour, she is glad to get back to her own, own mistress!"

And, caressing the dog, chattering, gesticulating,

coquetting, miladi trips, with girlish activity, up the stairs—little Major Brett by her side, Schmidt, secretary, waiters, lady's-maid, in attendance.

Biron looks after her for a moment as if uncertain whether to remain or follow. Then he flings down the shawl upon one of the heaps of luggage close at hand, and makes his way off, by a side-door, into the house.

The Misses Conyngham linger still in their place of concealment.

"And so Mark is coming to Esterel!" observes Cora. "Aunt Gwendoline was right. Aunt Gwen said she knew poor Mark would follow—"

"What—what do you think of Laurence?" interrupts Jet, eagerly.

But her voice is sobered.

The realities of the last three minutes have swept half the glory from her dreams, half the halo of romance from Mr. Laurence Biron.

"I think he seems well accustomed to carrying Lady Austen's lap-dog," is Cora's answer.

CHAPTER XV.

A WOMAN-HATER'S WOES.

PRECISELY at this moment, in the humblest Provençal inn of the old town, miladi's *enfant chéri* is sitting down to dinner; one other Englishman—the melancholy-looking misogynist whom we last saw at Miss Wylie's side in the Paradis—his companion.

No luxurious, German-kept hotels for young Mark! Accustomed, for years, to shape his way of life in accordance with self-imposed poverty, Mark Austen, from habit and taste alike, shuns all the fine-gentleman surroundings amid which he was reared as a child.

Especially are the gilt-and-white, mirror-lined *salons* of monster hotels flavored by recollections that he abhors.

It was in mirror-lined *salons* that, dressed in velvet and point-lace, his yellow curls hanging about his shoulders, he was his mother's companion as long as he remained at a picturesque age, and could make his exits and his entrances along with the Fifine of the minute—an accessory, like a becoming curtain or bouquet of bright flowers, to the well-painted picture, held up for the world's admiration, of Lady Austen herself.

It was in mirror-lined *salons* that, as a lad, keenly alive to the humiliation of his position, he was forced to make Mr. Laurence Biron's acquaintance, to look upon him as his future step-father—to be civil to him!

I repeat, no luxurious, German-kept hotel for Mark! His mother's telegram bade him join her at the Paradis on his arrival in Esterel, and he can forecast pretty accurately the amount of stucco and veneer, of Barmacidical repasts, and exorbitant charges, that would await him there. When he has received some explanation of this unlooked-for summons, knows upon what ground, after years of cruel estrangement, he stands, it is possible that he and his mother may stay under the same roof once more. Till then—

Till then Mark descends and orders his dinner at the Petit St.-Joseph, one of the quaint old French inns where travelers may count upon finding flagged floors, coarse table-linen, a master who also acts as *chef* and waiter, excellent cooking, and civility. When will English people learn to do their traveling "with brains, sir?" When, eschewing crimson velvet, retinues of servants, gilt, ormolu, and starvation, will they seek homely comfort in the Petit St.-Josephs of the countries through which they pass?

Well, during the first half of the meal talk languishes. The misogynist seems wrapped in gloomy reveries—possibly of Miss Wylie, and of the dangers from which he has newly escaped. Mark's mind is filled with eager speculations as to the future—speculations amid which his chance of again coming across Jet Conyngham holds a foremost place. By the time, however, that they get to an excellently-roasted *poulet de Bresse*, Dr. Oldham begins to thaw. Over dessert and a well-kept bottle of burgundy, he is expansive—young Mark listening, carelessly, as a man may listen to the idle tongue of a bell which to-morrow shall toll a death-knell over all the human happiness he possesses.

"I have spent the last two winters in Algeria, sir, and got on pretty well there. Found an hotel ladies did *not* frequent. There was the secret." The doctor takes off his spectacles, and gazes with solemn, short-sighted eyes at the rudely-daubed frescoes of saints and martyrs that adorn the whitewashed walls. "This winter Clarkson thought the climate of Esterel might do for me, and since the end of October, four horrible weeks, I have endured existence at the Hôtel Paradis. You know the place?"

"I know the type of place," replies Mark. "All hotels of that size and price are the same."

"For a man traveling with relations, protected by his own party, it might be different. I am alone. Why do capitalists not build special hotels for solitary and unprotected men? Following some detestable rule of the establishment, they placed a lady at my right hand for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. At first my neighbor was a good old French *mère de famille*, who ate her food in silence, and allowed me to do the same. This respectable woman, however, left, and was succeeded"—he gives an involuntary shudder at the remembrance—"was succeeded by an English person, with curls, with high spirits, with ridiculous infantine affectations, and who talked!"

The poor little woman-hater is solemnly, tragically in earnest. He passes his handkerchief over his forehead, puts on his spectacles again, and, filling his glass to the brim with burgundy, proceeds:

"At first I humored her, weakly thinking that she must, perforce, talk herself out—that three or four days would see the evil abate. Sir, she got worse! She got intolerable, sir! Offered me to look over her journal—me to look over the record of any woman's follies! Asked if I copied music, or would act showman at wax-works, or help to or-

ganize a lawn-tennis club. I changed my place at table. She changed hers. I went down by the door. She went there, too. After dinner she would follow me about the *salon* with a gobang-board. I played, to avoid talking. Then I talked, to avoid playing. My meals, my evenings, alike were made a terror to me. I believe a fortnight more of it would have driven me to suicide—on my soul, I do!"

"But you have found courage to break away from this siren at last?" says Mark Austen.

"Yes. I received an invitation yesterday to an afternoon-tea with music, and I packed my portmanteau and fled. Before I left the Paradis I heard they were going to get up dances—'weekly dances' ('twas she who told me), 'at which gentlemen would be *so* much wanted!' If I am found out here I shall have no alternative but again to pack my portmanteau and move on. I know a little travelers' inn, outside Bordighera, to which ladies do not go. I believe I might feel safe there."

"Your first suggestion should be carried out," says Mark, not without a smile. "Hotels for the unprotected bachelor would answer, as a mere commercial speculation."

"Of course, there are men who appreciate petticoat tyranny, invalids who find the bore of illness lessened by hourly attentions, sympathies, consolations, and the like. Now, there is an invalid, a *malade imaginaire*, staying at the Hôtel Paradis—what is his name? Carruthers, Carrington, Conyngham—that is it, Conyngham. An invalid, with a daughter, handsome, yellow-haired girl, who has thrown herself away upon the Reverend Laurence Biron. Well, sir, this Mr. Conyngham—"

The doctor branches forth into stories about the Scottish widow and her ministrations, stories about good little books, downcast eyelids, and water-gruel. And Mark, with his heart on fire, listens in silence! A minute later, "I believe you mentioned the name of Laurence Biron?" he observes, quietly. "Is Laurence Biron staying at the Hôtel Paradis?"

His manner is reserved, his tone indifferent; but, as he speaks, Mark Austen rises from the table—he stands, his face in shadow, and gazes down into the flames that dart and crackle from the logs of pine-wood on the hearth.

A handsome, yellow-haired girl who has thrown herself away upon Laurence Biron. . . . Ay, but there must be some mistake! it is not—not Jet's name that has thus become common on men's tongues! Fate, in its mood of sharpest irony, can never have decreed that Laurence Biron, the man who, from another cause, has poisoned his whole young life, should now be his successful rival with the woman he loves!

"The Reverend Laurence Biron is at the Paradis; lady-killer-in-chief of the establishment. A friend of yours, did you say?"

"On the contrary," answers Mark; "I know his name. I do not know Mr. Biron personally."

This is strictly true. Were young Mark to meet the Reverend Laurence Biron on the pavement in Paris, London, Florence, he would not lift his hat to him.

"You will soon know him, by sight, at least, if you make any stay in Esterel. The Reverend Laurence Biron does not hide his light under a bushel. Equally as a matter of course, your eyes will become familiar with the charms of Miss Jet Conyngham."

Mark turns round with a swing. He glares fiercely down on the poor doctor, innocently pealing his walnuts, and babbling, as men with somewhat weak heads are apt to do, under the influence of strong wine.

"The pair may be seen together, morning, noon, and night, and at all times, untroubled by a chaperon. Mr. Conyngham is too taken up with sentimental friendship and fancied illness to look after his daughter—indeed, as far as that goes, I dare say, like most daughters of the period, she is pretty well able to take care of herself—"

"And you intend to hint, I assume," interrupts Mark Austen, under his breath, "that Mr. Biron and —and Miss Conyngham—are lovers—engaged to be married?"

Dr. Oldham hesitates.

"The people at the Hôtel Paradis are all of them strangers to you?" he asks, a little uncertainly.

"Strangers? Yes, of course. *Strangers*," Mark replies, with moody emphasis.

"Then I am safe in telling you what I know to be fact as regards Mr. Laurence Biron's prospects. I do not like the man, you understand. Worst pattern of parson I ever came across. But that is a matter of personal taste. Young ladies do like him, Miss Jet Conyngham especially, and he—likes the thought of Miss Jet Conyngham's forty thousand pounds! That is about the state of affairs, I take it."

"Forty thousand pounds!" repeats Mark, stupefied; some rapid intuition shadowing forth to him the fatal game of cross-purposes in which Jet has played the part at once of heroine and victim.

"A good round sum, is it not? No bad prize for a Mr. Laurence Biron to have picked up? At first, when I heard the thing spoken of, I disbelieved it, as I disbelieved everything in the Hôtel Paradis, on principle. Heiresses of nineteen do not, in this generation, fall over head and ears in love with penniless adventurers, black-coated or otherwise. But I was mistaken; Miss Jet Conyngham has displayed the generic wrongheadedness and perversity of her sex."

At this point, Mark, it is obvious, should ask questions. He speaks not a word; stands blankly staring still, with a far-off expression, at the fire; is, in truth, morally stunned, although far from the stage of insensibility at which no fresh pain can be experienced.

"Four or five days ago they got up an afternoon expedition to Tamaris, a well-named donkey-expedition, consisting of half the people of the ho-

tel. I was one of them! Sir, I detest these out-of-door assemblages. I am obliged to winter in the south, to give up London, and my profession, and everything else that makes life worth living. That is bad enough, without having the very face of Nature spoiled for me, the very woods and mountains vulgarized by foolish gushes of mock enthusiasm, by the presence of picnic-baskets, sketch-books, and parasols. However, at the eleventh hour, I went—just as I did everything else at the Hôtel Paradis, from compulsion. The day was fine, I had a supply of cigars in my pocket; when I was once in the forests I contrived to shake myself free from—from the person at whose side I had the unhappiness to find myself. What became of the expedition I cannot tell you. Two members of it I lighted upon, suddenly, at a latish hour in the afternoon, in a remote quarter of the forest — Laurence Biron and Miss Jet Conyngham!"

Again he pauses; and again Mark Austen continues rigidly silent. But Dr. Oldham, misogynist though he be, as great a news-monger, in his way, as Major Brett, will not be balked of telling his little bit of scandal by any want of interest on the part of his listener.

"I am painfully near-sighted, as you my have remarked, and I was within a dozen paces of Mr. Biron and his companion before I awoke to my position. Happily for myself, the underwood at that part of the forest was thick, and I was able to beat a hasty retreat, unnoticed. You asked me if any engagement of marriage exists between them. I hesitated before giving you an answer. What I *saw*, in spite of my wish to see nothing, was—Miss Jet Conyngham throw her arms round Laurence Biron's neck, and—"

"It is false—false as—!"

And Mark Austen's face turns livid to the very lips.

"False!" exclaims the little doctor, starting up, with an instinctive backward movement in the direction of the door.

"Sir—I must ask you to pardon me!" cries poor Mark, once more remembering his position, the madness of constituting himself Jet's champion. "I owe you every apology," he adds, "but I was occupied with my own thoughts rather than with your words. The truth is, I have been traveling for the last two nights, and my head is confused. I must try if fresh air will not restore me to my senses."

He walks quickly out through the time-blackened archway of the Petit St.-Joseph, walks quickly through the narrow, winding lanes of Esterel proper. Outside one or two palm-shaded *cafés* are knots of citizens enjoying their nightly dissipation of sugar-water and cigarettes. Some muleteers, coming in late from the mountains, whistle, with light hearts and free, as they pass along. The world, one miserable human creature excepted, is in spirits!

Mark Austen walks on, unheeding of his road; in three minutes' time finds himself opposite the gilt-and-bronze railings, the rose-draped statues, the gas-illumined letters of the Grand Hôtel Paradis.

The venetians of the dining-room are unclosed, and a flood of brilliant light pours forth into the court-yard. Not a servant of the hotel is abroad. Even old Hans, the *concierge*, dreams of the Vaterland, his head upon his breast, in the most comfortable corner of the portico. Mark steps within shadow of the house, walks quickly to the nearest window, and sees—Jet! Jet not a dozen yards away from him, and all unconscious whose eyes watch her in jealous wretchedness from the outside darkness.

She is dressed in white, as Biron likes best to see her, with delicate natural flowers gleaming, like snow, in her hair and at her breast. Her cheeks are flushed; her whole face is lit up, radiant with excitement. Mr. Biron, from his place on the opposite side of the table, is leaning forward and addressing her.

"The handsome, yellow-haired girl who has thrown herself away on Laurence Biron."

When Mark heard those words, carelessly uttered, they stabbed him to the quick. Judge if his wound is healed by this palpable, living confirmation of their truth!

CHAPTER XVI.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

An Arles head-dress; pearl-powder, not too artistically showered over a brickdust-colored skin; trailing velvet skirts; a lap-dog supported on arms to which all the bismuth, all the bracelets in the world, can never restore the look of youth! Such elements make up the jarring whole that sweeps, with an air, into the *salon* of the Grand Hôtel Paradis on this first evening of Mr. Laurence Biron's return to Esterel.

"Miladi!" goes from mouth to mouth, for 'tis her first public appearance; Lady Austen, with her Fifine, dined in the privacy of her own apartments. And then, as if by common impulse, all eyes are turned in the direction of Jet Conyngham.

If the situation be not correctly understood in detail, its general bearings are sufficiently well guessed at for the dramatic interest to be keen. Most of the people present know that Laurence Biron's marriage with Lady Austen has been a contingency speculated on for years. Every one of them, during the past fortnight, has seen him, openly and devotedly, Jet's slave.

"Subjugated by those fine eyes of hers, or by the *beaux yeux de sa cassette?*" In terms like these, little Major Brett answers the dozen whispered inquiries that beset him. "Ah! my dear madam, this is a question for the future. Impossible to pronounce a moral while the fable is incomplete. Impossible to judge of motive until we read the last chapter of the story."

Jet, whatever secret aching may be at her heart, bears herself bravely.

"I think I ought to have been warned," she re-

marks—miladi, with Lady Macbeth mien, having swept past the window within whose embrasure she and Cora stand, Laurence Biron beside them. "For most things I was prepared; not for this!—Pray, Mr. Biron, did the Arles coiffure travel on direct from Avignon to Florence, or has it been carefully stored away in your possession till to-night?"

"If you are strong, be merciful," is Biron's answer. "I told you, at the time (you were looking 'beautiful by proxy,' if you remember!), that the Arles coiffure was to be worn by—well, by a lady no longer in the first giddy heyday of youth."

"I am not so sure on the score of giddiness," says Jet, maliciously. "There is a want of balance, a certain crazy, tottering look about the whole edifice, that, to me, is alarming. Do you not think you ought to be at hand, sir, just in case of any sudden downfall?"

Cora, upon this, joins in, with the usual blunt directness characteristic of her type, the want of tact that renders unimaginative people the terrible children of society.

"Mark Austen and his mother are as like as two people can be, Jet. When first miladi got down from the omnibus I did not see it, but now I recognize Mark in every feature."

"When first miladi got down from the omnibus!" repeats Biron, blankly.

He is a man by no means fond of children, terrible or otherwise. He feels, although as yet he has scarcely exchanged a dozen sentences with her, that he is not fond of his future sister-in-law. Something in the tone of Cora's steady voice, in the gaze of her round, black, unchanging eyes, at once irritates and embarrasses him.

"Ah! I see we may as well make a clear confession," cries Jet, sensitive as iodine to light to every expression of his face. "Cora has never kept a secret for more than half an hour in her life, and is too old to mend her ways now. We—we ran down to see the omnibus arrive from Salon. Of course, I expected no one but you, sir; and we stood behind the screen of plants in the portico, and—"

"It was very diverting, indeed," proceeds Cora, as Jet hesitates. "I felt as if I was at the play! All about the glove and the luggage, and '*Fifine, ma mie, ma bibiche!*'"

The blood mounts hotly to Laurence Biron's temples.

"I need not ask if I have been missed, if you have been dull during my absence?" he remarks to Jet, later on in the evening. "Your sister's charming flow of spirits must be an effectual safeguard against *ennui*."

"I have missed you every minute of the time—missed you in spite of my joy at seeing Cora," Jet answers, simply. "As to *ennui*—guess how we amused, or tried to amuse, ourselves yesterday night, when all the rest of the world was sound asleep?"

"Not in discussing my demerits, I trust?"

"In telling your fortune, Mr. Biron. I cut the cards for you, and Cora made out their meaning. Oh, you may smile—Cora has the *gift*. It was born with her. I do not like to think how near the truth Cora's soothsayings come."

"Well, is fortune favorable to me, or the reverse?" says Biron; and he smiles, but uneasily. "Cora's predictions included the usual dark woman and fair man, and letter from over the sea, of course?"

"Cora told exactly what you had been doing yesterday in Nice. During the first part of the day your mind was set on money."

"Perfectly, absolutely true," Mr. Biron confesses. (Upon what day, he adds, mentally, and at what hour, is his mind not set on money?) "Afterward?"

"Who," says Jet, turning her eyes full upon her lover—"who was the lady you thought of, and watched during the evening? She was blond—blonder than I am, *fearfully pretty*, and Cora declared, though, for my part, I refused to believe it, that you made her a present."

Just for a moment Mr. Biron pauses. Then—

"Cora's clairvoyance is beyond a jest, my love," he remarks, gravely. They are so placed as to be out of reach of curious ears, and Cora, for a space, has left them alone. "If your sister can tell fortunes after this fashion, she must be a little witch, and I shall not allow you to have anything to say to her."

"Ah, sir! then there was some one?"

Jet Conyngham's foolish heart beats, her lips tremble.

"There was—Rose Pinson, a French dancer, whom I remember, years ago, in Paris. I felt so lonely without you, child, that I spent my evening at the theatre—"

"Oh, pray, go on!"

"And from sheer idleness threw a bouquet of flowers at Mademoiselle Pinson's feet. Now, is Cora a witch?"

"I am glad I know the worst," and Jet's breast heaves a big sigh of relief. "I—Laurence!" she exclaims, with sudden earnestness, "I hope to Heaven I am not going to be jealous!"

"I hope not, most devoutly," he replies. "Jealousy, my dear child—I speak from knowledge—is the ugliest vice by which a woman can be deformed. If it is impossible, as some people say, for love to exist without it, I, for one, would far sooner exist without love."

"I make my mind up. From this hour forth I will never again be jealous while I live. Throw bouquets to Mademoiselle Pinson. Take mysterious railway-journeys with Lady Austen. I shall be silent, a Griselda of resignation, through it all."

"Mysterious railway-journeys? I first, to my astonishment, saw Lady Austen at Salon Station. From Salon Station I drove with her to Esterel—in dead silence. Lady Austen, in a good temper, has—well—has some admirable qualities. Lady Austen, in her present state of mind, is—the devil!"

The word seems to escape him involuntarily. Scarcely is it uttered when miladi, her lap-dog reposing on her arms, sails slowly across the room, and stands confronting him.

Fifine, recognizing her enemy, gives a vicious

snap. Little Major Brett (with whom Lady Austen has been just conversing in animating whispers) glances round him in some sort as an artist might do if seeking to call the world's attention to his work.

Miladi stands motionless.

She looks Jet Conyngham from head to foot. She looks the Reverend Laurence Biron from head to foot.

Never a word does she utter.

Well, reader, for half a minute's space Jet feels the crisis to be tragical exceedingly. Then, veering round, "as 'tis her nature to," the girl sees it in its farcical outside aspect, and raises her handkerchief to her lips.

Never was unwise impulse more unwisely yielded to. Lady Austen is totally without the sense of humor herself. Would she wear that Arles head-dress, would she dizen herself with bismuth, rouge, and pearl-powder, had she one grain of humor? She can, in no wise, pardon the possession of it by others. Laugh at her, and, if she be not your enemy beforehand, it will be war to the knife between you and miladi forever after.

"Good-evening to you, Mr. Biron.—Fifine, *ma charmante*, keep quiet! Mr. Biron is a friend—you hear, *charmante*, a *friend!* I have come to solicit a favor" (this with a little theatrical downward inclination of the head)—"an introduction to Miss Jet Conyngham."

Her voice, considering that it is Lady Austen's voice, is suave; her manner amicable.

Jet Conyngham repents her of her levity.

After all, what are miladi's crimes, real or suspected? The wish to appear youthful in Laurence Biron's eyes, the caring for Laurence Biron absurdly but too well. If Lady Austen feel bitterly toward herself, Jet Conyngham, is there matter for wonder? Should not generosity, delicacy, make her look with pity upon this woman, old enough to be her grandmother, of whom she may have been, unwittingly, the successful rival?

Mr. Biron introduces the two ladies with what grace he may. He waits in an agony of expectation for Lady Austen's first words.

She is quite capable, as he has proved before this, of disgracing him before a *salon* full of people. Probably it is her intention to disgrace him now. Will Jet's pride, would the pride of any sensitive girl of nineteen, stand an ordeal so humiliating?

But Lady Austen's disposition—could one forget the expression of her eyes, her lips—is honey-sweet.

"You are making some stay in Esterel, my dear? So your papa tells me. I have just been renewing my old acquaintance with your papa. We have known Mr. Conyngham for ages—I should think before this young lady left off pinafores, Laurence."

"It is certainly some years since I first had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Conyngham," stammers Laurence Biron.

"And you have been exploring the woods, I hear, under Mr. Biron's chaperonage. You could find no one better qualified as a guide.—I suppose there is not one excursion within ten miles of Esterel that we have not taken, Laurence? Alas!—

> 'Nous n'irons plus aux bois,
> Les lauriers sont coupés!'"

Biron has grown white to the very lips.

Her mode of attack is not the one on which he counted, yet it is none the less deadly. Nay, as the unknown has ever more terrors for us than the known, it seems to him that Lady Austen, quiet, dignified, quoting sentimental verse, is more to be feared in very truth than Lady Austen loud and reckless.

Miladi sees what impression she has produced on him—about Jet she neither recks nor cares—and the corners of her mouth tighten.

"You and your half-sister do not resemble each other, Miss Jet Conyngham. The young lady who leans her arm against Mr. Conyngham's chair is your sister?"

"My sister Cora," answers Jet. "No; we are as different as possible—are we not? People tell me I am like papa; and Cora—"

"Is the living image of her mother," remarks miladi, quickly. "I remember your father's first wife as she looked upon her wedding-morning—a good many more years ago than I care to count! I have been a professed vagabond, a kind of Italian strolling player, all my life, my dear." No one better understands than miladi the difficult art of using truth as a vehicle for falsehood. "And as I am an old woman now, and have a faithful memory—a faithful memory, Mr. Biron—there are few things connected with the lost tribes of the Peninsula during the past five-and-twenty years that are unknown to me."

"I—I was not aware that you and papa had been acquainted so long," says Jet, but with hesitation. She feels the subject of years and age to be a perilous one.

"We were not acquainted, personally, until later on. Your papa's marriage was an event much talked of, and I went, with half Florence, to the English chapel to witness it. Alas, alas! 'Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.' You, my dear, are too young to have begun regretting time's flight."

As Lady Austen speaks, the first notes of one of Moore's most delicious melodies are struck on the piano. A minute later, and a soprano voice, sweet, full, *Irish*, fills the whole vast *salon* with its music.

The performer is an amateur, whose renown, as a singer of ballads, is European. Not by the lips of any artist in London could the song be rendered with higher finish, with pathos more delicate and subtile.

Miladi, who, if the telling of her age depended on it, could scarcely distinguish a requiem from a polka, puts herself in an attitude and endures it, much as she might endure any excellence that should turn away attention from herself.

Laurence Biron, one of whose saving graces is a love for music, stands spellbound.

"Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning!"

At the conclusion of the verse, he turns, and looks at Jet.

The girl's whole countenance is aglow with keenly-roused feeling; her lips are parted, her eyes moist.

To the last hour of his life Mr. Biron will surely never forget that moment—the sentiment of the words, the touching voice that sings, the exquisite face whose "wild freshness of morning" it has been his special work to destroy!

"Fifine, *mon unique amour*," cries miladi, when the song is over, holding up the dog (as, in his infant days, she certainly never upheld poor Mark) to her face. "We are tired after our journey, and must seek repose and meditation, *ma mie*—must we not?—Miss Jet Conyngham, most pleased and honored to have made your acquaintance," dropping a stately reverence, but never extending her hand for Jet's acceptance.—"Mr. Biron, I wish you a very good night."

And, having so spoken, the eyes of every one riveted upon her departure as upon her advent, she walks, with the step and gait of a transpontine Cleopatra, across the *salon*.

Biron, hapless Antony of the performance, follows. He holds open the door for Lady Austen to pass out.

"I have a trifling bit of news to tell you," she remarks, in a whisper that he knows over-well. "You will leave Miss Conyngham's side. You will come to my apartment at once."

And then, in a voice hoarse, all but incoherent, with passion, she utters one other word aloud—"Vendetta!"

CHAPTER XVII.

IN MILADI'S CHAMBER.

GONE are French phrases, theatrical affectations; gone is Fifine. Thunder-showers of angry tears have washed the pearl-powder down Lady Austen's cheeks. Ribbons, brooches, bracelets, lie in a heap upon the table. The *woman*, tragedy-queen no longer, stripped of meretricious adornment, remains. A commonplace virago, pacing her apartment with angry steps; jealousy burning fiercely at her heart; wounded vanity sharpening, beforehand, the reproaches with which she is about to assail her recreant lover.

A commonplace virago, unlovely externally, unlovely of soul, yet with justice, with right, indubitably on her side.

Right! There is the cause that held Laurence Biron silent during their five miles' drive from Salon; there the cause that makes him shrink, cowardly, from confronting her now.

Villains cast in the true heroic mould should be above, or beneath, caring for these abstract questions, prepared consistently to follow the line of action chalked out for them by their own desires.

The foundations of Mr. Biron's character are laid in sand.

Essentially weak, beneath all his outward varnish of stoicism, Laurence Biron is a man forever to seize the surface-good of the moment and to repent him of having seized it at the next—a man, as we have seen before, who even poses in touching little moral attitudes, with no other audience than his own consciousness!

During any number of years past, he has been Lady Austen's quasi-suitor, so far seriously affianced as to be able, with some decent shreds of self-respect, to derive perennial support from her comfortable widow's jointure. It has been the best thing he could do, the surface-good of the moment—just as the winning (perchance breaking) Jet Conyngham's fresh heart has been the "best thing" now. He cannot, as a tougher-fibred, less self-conscious scoundrel might, cast the connection aside boldly.

Walking along the corridor which leads to miladi's apartments, certain shaky sensations about his knees make him realize, forcibly, through what kind of ordeal criminals must pass on their way to the scaffold. A telltale moisture gathers continually on his forehead, his handsome face is blanched to a most unhandsome sallowness.

He knocks. The tone in which miladi bids him "Come in" is not one calculated to restore his valor. But it is too late, now, for retreat or vacillation. He enters; closes the door behind him; advances to the centre of the room.

Lady Austen and the Reverend Laurence Biron stand face to face.

"You have found courage to come, then?" This is her greeting of him. "You have found courage to come, to look me in the eyes, after your conduct to-night?"

"You desired to see me," he answers, somewhat doggedly. How but with doggedness shall a man meet such a woman's violence? "And I am here."

"You are here—yes! Perhaps you would like to know what sort of figure you cut in my sight?"

Mr. Biron expresses no curiosity on the subject. He has walked up to the hearth, and stands there, his back turned to the fire. His eyes are fixed on a mirror at the farther end of the apartment—a mirror so hung as to reflect back to him the image of his own white face during the whole continuance of the interview.

"I have never had a very high opinion of you, *mon ami*, at the best of times."

"I have never had a very high opinion of myself, Lady Austen—of myself, or of my position."

"But as I saw you to-night, at the side of that foolish school-girl, assuming, or attempting to assume, the manner of a lad of twenty, you looked more thoroughly contemptible than I have ever seen you yet."

"If it is to go through scenes, to listen to recriminations of this kind, that—" So he is beginning, in the old tone of mastery which, sooner or later, he has always managed to reach in the course of the hottest quarrels. But Lady Austen cuts him short; not without a certain genuine dignity.

"You are here to listen to whatever I choose to

say, Mr. Biron, and, take my honest word for it, you will leave this room a wiser man, by far, than you entered it. Recrimination—scenes! No. We are past all that kind of weakness, I should hope. A point or two past it."

Miladi stops in her walk—for up to this moment she has continued to pace restlessly to and fro, as she had done before his entrance. She advances to him—lays a hand upon his arm.

"Laurence," she says, in a voice so softened that, for a second, it takes him aback, "I talked of my vendetta a while since. I longed for it! And yet now—now that vendetta is so close, I am sorry for you."

Mr. Biron does not reply.

"Sorry for you, to a degree impossible for you to guess at—yet. Do you"—the words evidently leave her lips with an effort—"do you *care* for this miss-in-her-teens, this child, Jet Conyngham?"

"Lady Austen—"

"I want an answer, a true one if it is possible for you to speak the truth. Do you care for her?"

"I admire Miss Jet Conyngham immensely. Most men would do the same."

"That is a matter of opinion; no answer whatever to my question. Is it admiration for her that has prevented your writing to me during the past fortnight? Admiration that has kept you in Esterel? Admiration that made you slight, trample upon me—a room full of people present to witness the insult—as you did to-night?"

"Really, Lady Austen, I must ask you to use less extravagant language if you would have me understand you. What insult, actual, implied, shadowed, have I offered you?"

"You have offered me the insult of neglect, sir! neglect, gross and intentional. Do you think, when I entered the room, I did not see you, laughing, whispering, with Miss Conyngham, making me, I have no doubt, the subject of your jests? Do you think I did not feel it when, as the evening wore on, you never went through the empty form, even, of coming near me? You have told me, sometimes, that my master-passion is vanity. Allowed. How must my vanity, my master-passion, have smarted under your treatment to-night!"

Biron casts about in his thoughts for an efficient means of self-defense. Finding none, he remarks, somewhat weakly, that he should not suppose any one in the *salon* of the Hôtel Paradis paid much heed to his actions.

But Lady Austen cuts him short.

"The whole of the people in that *salon* paid heed to you, Mr. Biron—the K——s, the L——s"—rapidly she names the different inmates of the hotel—"Major Brett, Frederick Conyngham, himself. Are we not known, personally or by repute, to every English person in the house?"

"*Known*, indeed!" repeats Laurence Biron, almost with a groan.

"Do you suppose"—old woman though she be, a flush rises on miladi's cheek; her eyes droop—"do you suppose that my feelings, my right, at least, to your outward respect, are not understood?"

Mr. Biron fidgets about uneasily; he passes his hand over his forehead.

"You are making me thoroughly unhappy by all these reproaches, Helena, and I really fail to see that you are doing any good to yourself. It was inevitable, actually inevitable," he repeats, steeling himself to strike a decisive blow, "that our relations toward each other must alter, as time wore on."

Lady Austen moves a little away from him. She rests her arm against the wall, as if to steady herself under some suddenly-inflicted bodily pain.

"Inevitable that our relations must alter! I can understand an honorable man being forced to speak like this—under some circumstances. Hardly in yours. If you felt sure, beforehand, of your own faithlessness, I wonder you could accept—could incur such solid money obligations as you stand in toward me."

It is not a generous speech. With love—well, no! we will not say with love lying bleeding—but with vanity newly stabbed, with jealous passion at white-heat, it is to be feared that few women of Lady Austen's type would show very fine or delicate generosity. One thing is certain. Her reply, unworthy though it be, is on a moral level no lower than the taunt that called it forth.

"I am your debtor to an extent that makes me blush," says the Reverend Laurence Biron, coldly. "Still, if anything could lighten the uneasy load of my obligation, it would be for your lips to remind me of it in such a moment as this. For every hundred pounds that you have ever been good enough to lend me, Lady Austen, you have, I think, my note of hand—"

"*Your* note of hand!" Miladi laughs—a laugh not pleasant to hear.

"And before very long I shall be in a position to repay you all. By Heaven!" exclaims Biron, drawing himself up as though he already felt himself free from the chains that shackle him, "that first hour of liberty will be the sweetest one I have tasted for a good many years."

Lady Austen looks at him fixedly.

"You will be in a position soon to repay your debts—debts, if you force me into calling a spade a spade, that can no longer be reckoned by hundreds! I am glad to hear it. From rumors that had reached me during the last ten days, I feared that bankruptcy—worse, even, than all that went before—awaited you in the future. Laurence" (after a pause), "I suppose this must, in some sort, be looked upon as a good-by between you and me?"

"If you choose to make it so. I know of no cause or just impediment to stand in the way of our continuing friends."

"You see, I have reasons for wishing to be explicit. Mark will be with me to-morrow; he is probably in Esterel at this moment. I have felt it my duty, standing alone as I stand now, to send for the boy. I shall have to speak to him of my affairs, and in pretty plain language."

It seems to Mr. Biron that her tone implies a threat, and his spirit rises.

"Your son Mark has hated me always, Lady Austen. You talk of insult! What insult have I not, for your sake, put up with from Mark? Why, the last time I saw him—"

"All that is as well left alone—buried in the past; I wish to deal with things that concern me—nearly, in the present. Is Mark to be told, or not, that you have broken your faith to me?"

The question is uttered with a gasp. Miladi sinks down into the nearest chair. She covers her face over with her thin, jeweled hands.

Mr. Biron's "æsthetic conscience" remains untouched, his sensibility hard as the nether millstone! He has been going through scenes of a like nature during a course of years, it must be remembered; knows Lady Austen, and her histrionic capabilities, to a shade.

How should he guess that for once the clever actress is merged in the passionate woman, how believe that under so much paint and pearl-powder (moral as well as physical) there beats a heart—frivolous, if you will, vain, selfish, but still a *heart*, loving him with all the love it has to give, bleeding at every pore over his infidelity?

"Mark will be only too rejoiced to hear that you are rid of me at last."

She lifts her face; she looks at him with a steadfast, piteous earnestness.

"Rid of you! I understand—I understand. And the world at large—a trifling consideration to a man, perhaps—to a woman, everything. How is the world going to receive me after such an *esclandre* as this?"

"I am at a loss to know what you allude to when you use the term '*esclandre*?'"

"I allude to your marriage with Miss Jet Conyngham; I allude to your treachery to me. Have I not given up money, friends, the affection of those nearest and dearest to me, for your sake, sir? Have I not incurred the reproaches of society?"

Biron turns round upon her, a smile—harder for her to bear than any outburst of violence—upon his lips.

"My dear Lady Austen, let us keep ourselves, please, within the regions of common-sense! Speak of money, and I answer, as I did just now, that I look forward with thankfulness to the approaching hour in which I shall be able to repay my obligations. Romantic regrets about 'society,' speculations as to the world thinking one thing or another, in the case of people of our age, are—excuse me for my frankness—absolutely too ridiculous."

It is a speech over the remembrance of which the Reverend Laurence Biron will, I doubt not, be made to smart throughout the remainder of his natural life.

Miladi starts up, lightning-quick; she stands looking at him—stands with fury gleaming in her eyes, with hands clinched, with swelling veins.

"Age! Well, I have sunk low, indeed! I have received the last indignity you had it in your power to offer. Age!" In the whole English language there is probably no other word that Lady Austen could pronounce with such loathing emphasis. "This, indeed, sets me free from all promises—this ends the friendship of years fitly. Oh, sir, there is something yet for you to hear before you go" (for Biron, at his first chance of liberation, has made a movement in the direction of the door): "I asked you a while since if you cared seriously for this girl to whom you have engaged yourself—this Miss Jet Conyngham. I repeat my question now."

"It is a question you have no right whatever to ask, Lady Austen, but, as you press me, I am ready to answer it. I do care for the girl I hope to make my wife."

"That is fortunate for her and for you. Where money is at stake, one cannot always feel sure of affection accompanying men's choice; but, of course, in the present case there can be small doubt as to the disinterestedness of all parties. You—well, Laurence, you are never likely to be burdened with this world's goods: Jet Conyngham is a pauper—"

"Lady Austen—"

"Except so far as Mr. Conyngham—or, perhaps, the sister—may choose to make her some small allowance."

"You—you are laboring under a gross mistake," he articulates, slowly, with half-drawn breath.

"Mistake? Oh, not the slightest. You remember a letter I wrote you last month? It met you at Avignon—a letter commissioning you to send me this very head-dress I am wearing to-night. I told you in it about Mr. Conyngham's coming to Esterel with his daughter—the creole, the heiress. Well, when I heard of you afterward—you see, these little *historiettes* make to themselves wings—heard how you were paying your attentions to 'the rich Miss Conyngham,' I could not help feeling that perhaps I had myself to thank for your falseness. Judge of my surprise this evening to find you, Laurence Biron, caught by a pink-and-white face at last—romantically over head and ears in love, *not* with Cora Conyngham, the heiress, but with her half-sister Jet, the daughter of a penniless Boston beauty, a girl without a farthing!"

Laurence Biron stands like a man petrified—incredulous, as yet, of that which has befallen him, and still with a hundred trivial incidents, a hundred careless words of Jet's, rushing back upon his memory, and confirming the truth which it is worse than ruin for him to believe.

Lady Austen rings the bell twice; then, with a yawn, gathers up the heap of trinkets from the table.

"You will forgive me for summoning Vallance, I know. I am really dying of fatigue. I protest I don't think I ever felt so sleepy in my life; and, besides, I want to see my poor dear Fifine to her bed. What were we talking of? Oh, I remember—of Cora Conyngham, the heiress, the sister of your *fiancée*. Major Brett knows all about Cora Conyngham's money—recollects the mother's marriage—indeed, as I do myself. Forty thousand pounds on her twenty-third birthday—little Brett had it from Mr. Conyngham himself—and engaged to an

obscure country clergyman, with a Devonshire living of three hundred a year. 'Tis difficult to realize, no doubt, but such is the situation, *mon cher*. Such are the inequalities of fate."

Not a sound escapes Laurence Biron's set lips. Already, in this minute's space, the shipwreck of his hopes seems to have become old to him. Difficult to realize? Nay; happiness, not pain, requires time ere we can grow familiar with it. The fact hard of realization to Laurence Biron is, that one half-hour ago he was Jet's lover, freed from Lady Austen's yoke, with peace, independence, wealth, every fairest crown of human life, lying before him in a golden future!

A discreet lady's-maid tap comes at the door.

"In two seconds, Vallance!" cries out miladi, pleasantly. "Carry Fifine in at once: I shall follow immediately."

Then, turning to the Reverend Laurence Biron, ere she quits the room, she drops him a low courtesy.

"Our interview began stormily enough, *mon ami*, but it ends—ha! ha! excuse me, I cannot help a sense of diversion—in comedy—ha! ha!—a comedy of errors! You calculated shrewdly, Laurence—made the best of your time and of your fascinations, and only fell into one trifling mistake—that of losing your heart to the wrong sister! *A rivederla.*"

And, sending him a kiss from her finger-tips, in playful token of farewell, Lady Austen disappears.

She has told her bit of trifling news, has had her vendetta in good earnest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JUST A TOUCH OF ROUGE!

VENDETTA! The taste is good in Lady Austen's mouth; sweet is the sleep that follows—ay, and visited by flattering dreams.

Then comes reaction; the cold, gray hour of moral indigestion; the breaking of a new day. Where is her triumph now? With what zest can she look forward to witnessing Biron's ruin? What joy is there in knowing that she and Biron have broken with each other irrevocably?

Miladi pushes back her mosquito-curtains, takes a pocket-glass—to women of her type the one faithful friend—from the table beside her bed, and, by such light as the expiring night-lamp, the dull November morning, yield, studies her own face carefully.

It is a face whose natural charm half a century has swept away, a face upon which unbridled temper, late hours, cosmetics—Lady Austen's enemies might, perchance, add stimulants—have left their unmistakable seal: the face of an old woman!

This last fact miladi might certainly have known any time during the past dozen years or more; and still, under the glamour of Biron's constant companionship, she has never had it positively, cruelly brought home to her till this moment.

An old woman! In fancy she can see herself wandering about Europe with a maid and lap-dog, or virtuously keeping house for her son in a German university-town; later on, perhaps, sinking, in Bath or Cheltenham, to whist, knitting-needles, and bazaars—she, Lady Austen (with her adjuncts), one of the celebrities of Italy, sinking to whist, knitting-needles, and bazaars!

During her journey from Florence yesterday, in every varied conception that she has been able to form of a rupture with Biron, the mixture of certain fine, semi-tragic elements served to thrust the sense of personal humiliation aside. She would find her false lover upon the eve of marrying a richer bride, would denounce him publicly as traitorous and forsworn, and have—not exactly the censorious, strait-laced world, it might be, but a very picturesque minority of men and women—of men more especially—upon her side!

This was the high-colored sketch, dashed in by miladi's imagination. In reality, she finds—what? Laurence Biron in love—*in love* with a handsome, penniless girl of nineteen; herself, no interesting victim sacrificed by the mercenary fickle-heartedness of man, but simply the ridiculous duenna of whose pretensions, of whose jealousy, all operas, comedies, and novels, make a jest.

"What," she asks herself, with a shiver, "what will life be, from this day forth and for evermore, without Biron?"

To women neither vain nor frivolous, the day on which good-by must definitely be spoken to youth is a dreary one. Still, it comes in its appointed course. Though history, in the main, repeat itself, the legend of Ninon de l'Enclos remains unique. Lady Austen is a living anachronism; by a whimsical combination of accidents has breathed, ever since she first made Biron's acquaintance, in an atmosphere just fifteen or twenty years too young for her.

The world, so she flatters herself, has forgotten Angelina's wrinkles in remembering the age and handsome person of her Edwin—for, lacking even a rudimentary sense of humor, Lady Austen reflects not that it is possible to be notorious through sheer absurdity! Entering a dining-room or theatre on Biron's arm, riding on horseback in public places with Biron for her cavalier, she knows, yes, although her half-century of existence be well struck, that she is still "talked of"—with a shrug of the shoulders by some, with ill-suppressed smiles by others. No matter—"talked of."

Through some misty entanglement of ideas, possibly from the mere ring of Biron's name, one of her cherished notions has ever been that men regard her as a kind of second Guiccioli.

And now, all is over. The inevitable change in their relations has come; Biron, by her own lips, is set free, Mark summoned—that thought of Mark, perhaps, yields the sharpest sting of all—Mark summoned to be witness of their separation!

A bad time of it has Vallance, when she carries in her mistress's chocolate, and the last little scandal of the Hôtel Paradis. A bad time has Fifine, when she attempts to take her wonted place beside miladi's dressing-table for her breakfast of cream and macaroons.

Lady Austen is in no humor for servants'-hall gossip or lap-dog caresses. Lady Austen is in no humor for anything!

Anticipating I know not what series of dramatic tableaux, in which millinery details might fitly play a part, the poor soul has brought with her a dozen boxes or more of theatrical property; relays of morning-robes, evening-dresses, coiffures, perukes. The sight of these, her war-plumes, as they lie, half unpacked, about the chamber, gives the last finishing touch to her sense of failure, of abandonment.

What need, in the pass to which she has come, of longer fighting against the enemy, Time? Time has conquered her. As well bow to the inevitable, accept the blank, monotonous vista of days that lies before her, without a struggle. Butterfly-tinted wrappers, head-dresses of this reign or of that? No: miladi will have none of them. She will wear black; will wear her own hair, plainly braided; has *migraine*, palpitation of the heart; means to receive no visitors, unless, of course, Mr. Mark should arrive this morning. Then, when she stands before the mirror, in black, and with her own hair plainly braided, she begins to weep—yes, reader, to weep—pity her, or laugh at her, as you will—at the piteous image presented to her.

Old? Why, she looks fifteen, twenty years older than she did yesterday, and hollow-cheeked, ghastly. "If only for my poor child's sake, Vallance, I must make an effort. Give me some sal-volatile—show me my dresses. A *mother's heart* must put selfish weakness aside, in a moment like this." And the dresses are shown her—white, mauve, pink, the costly Paris confections are brought forth, successively, by the faithful hands of Vallance (Vallance, who grasps the whole state of affairs just a little more clearly than does her mistress herself). And still miladi is not pleased. She is too sallow for mauve, too faded for white; in her best days pink never suited her, save by candle-light. Decidedly, of all months in the year, November is the most unbecoming. Dear Dr. Herzlieb has explained to her about the actinic action of light. Some chemical peculiarity in the atmosphere must cause the human skin to look as it does to-day. Or can it be that the mirrors of the Hôtel Paradis are made of inferior, horribly unflattering glass?

At last, she plucks up heart enough to try on a delicate, cream-colored sack; one of Worth's latest achievements, and cut line for line, so the artist declares, from a genuine Pompadour, historically vouched for, and now in the possession of one of the noblest families of France.

Surely if panacea could be found for a stricken spirit it must be here—a dress made line for line, plait for plait, after an historically vouched-for Pompadour! And one consolation brings about another. By the time the sack is adjusted, the coiffure must be altered; and then, there are adjuncts of ribbons and laces; and then, a touch—"Well, if you insist upon it, Vallance, a touch of rouge, just to conceal the ravages of tears from my poor boy." Finally, by ten o'clock, Lady Austen descends the staircase, pearl-powdered, carmined, bewigged; Fifine in her arms; the usual *galimatias* on her tongue; as fearfully and wonderfully miladi as ever.

She sweeps along the corridors, conscious that even the servants look after her with admiration, whisper "Miladi" as she passes. She reaches her *salon*, pauses a moment at the door, in vague suspense as to whether her son may await her within—enters.

The Reverend Laurence Biron, white as any spectre, stands beside the hearth.

He comes forward with irresolute steps, with head down bent.

"Helena," he utters, in a tone out of which all resemblance to his ordinary voice seems to have vanished, "I am here to ask your forgiveness, to plead for a reconciliation. Am I too late?"

[CONCLUSION NEXT MONTH.]

HOW COME THE FLOWERS?

HOW come the early flowers of spring?
As robes herself my Phyllis sweet,
Just in her teens, while fresh years cling
Unto her as her gown discreet
Clings to her dainty ankles, fain
To lengthen as the years go on,
And usher in sweet woman's dawn.
A mirror-look—ah me! so vain!
Then shapely limbs are stockinged neat,
And slippers laced o'er dainty feet,
And breasts like slight-raised works on frieze
Are coyly hid 'neath white chemise;
Then, like the ghostly mists of spring,
She flits about on feet of air,
And, bluebird-like, essays to sing
Songs half-remembered in the press
Of her own sweet self-consciousness;
Then, with her wealth of gold-brown hair
She toys awhile, and coils or braids
Or curls are fixed as dainty aids
Toward that perfection she, dear girl,
Must be to be—herself, the pearl!
Then knot of ribbon, bright and fair,
Makes brighter still her wealth of hair;
Then suddenly a 'wildering flash
Of silk appears; and then a sash
Of daring color round her waist,
Where lover's arm has ne'er been placed—
All stately now, in blossom full,
In color rich and bountiful.
So come the flowers of spring. So slow
Comes blossom-eve, you scarcely know
'Tis half so near. Like Phyllis, prim,
Sweet Nature first must get in trim;
And when a blossom first in air
She flaunts like ribbon for her hair,
Before you know it, all around
Her dress with richness will abound,
And greens and scarlets, pinks and blues,
Shine in their freshest, brightest hues.

MRS. GAINSBOROUGH'S DIAMONDS.

V.

I SAW nothing more of Kate that day; but I came across Slurk several times, and there was a peculiar look on the fellow's countenance which made me renew my longing to chastise him. I was anxious to know whether Mr. Birchmore had returned; but, as I could not bring myself to make any inquiries of this valet, and did not care to let him see me asking any one else, I was obliged to remain in ignorance. However, as I sat out under the trees at dusk, a tall figure, with a lighted cigar in his mouth, appeared in the doorway of the hotel, and, on my saluting him, he sauntered up to my table, and complied with my invitation to sit down.

The waiter brought us coffee, and under its stimulus I ventured to introduce the subject which lay nearest my heart to Mr. Birchmore's notice. No doubt I put my best foot foremost, and spoke as eloquently as was consistent with my downright earnestness and sincerity. Mr. Birchmore heard me almost in silence, only giving evidence by an occasional word or interjection that he was giving me his attention. Once or twice, too, I was aware of his having given me one of those sharp, icy glances for which he was remarkable. When I had spoken, he fingered the pointed beard on his chin meditatively and puffed his cigar.

"This is a very fair and honorable offer that you make, Gainsborough," he said, at length. "I liked you before; I like you better now. You take it for granted, I suppose, that I am pretty well off. There, you needn't say anything—I've no doubt of your disinterestedness; but these matters would have to be mentioned, sooner or later, if the affair went on. I say 'if,' because—I may as well tell you at once, it will save us all pain—because it can't go on: it must stop right here; and I can only regret, for both your sakes, that it has gone so far."

"Mr. Birchmore, I cannot take this for an answer. You have given me no reasons. If you want confirmation of my account of myself, I can—"

"I want nothing of the sort—on the contrary, I feel complimented that you should accept *us*, not only without confirmation, but without question. But you can't marry my daughter, Gainsborough, much as I like you, and much as I dare say she does. When you are older, you will understand that men cannot always follow that course in the world which appears to them most desirable."

"However young or old I may be, Mr. Birchmore, I am old enough to know my own mind, and to require good reasons for changing it. If you have any such reasons, I wish you'd show your liking for me by telling me what they are."

"Do you remember a talk we once had in Paris, when you hinted that I should accompany you on your jaunt? I told you then that the past life of a man sometimes had a hold over his present, constraining his freedom, whether he would or not. And can't you imagine that those circumstances, however cogent they may be, or, very likely, just because they are so cogent, might be very inconvenient to talk about? To speak plainly, Gainsborough, I don't see how your loving my daughter obliges me to tell you all the secrets of my life."

"I don't want to know your secrets, sir; I wish to marry Miss Birchmore."

Mr. Birchmore laughed.

"Well, you're a pretty determined wooer," said he. "I can't give my consent to the match because—well, because I cannot; but, if you won't take no for an answer, nor profit by the warning I hereby give you, I'll tell you what I will do: I will allow you yourself to discover and acknowledge the causes which make your marriage with Kate impossible. You must not blame me if the discovery gives you pain, and the acknowledgment causes you mortification. I have given you fair warning. And I will only add, sir, that the pain and mortification won't be all on your side. I could not give you a stronger pledge of my friendship and liking for you than in thus letting you find out what has hitherto been hidden from all the world. And I only demand one condition—that you promise, when you have made your discovery and left us, never to mention to any human being what our secret was."

"I give that promise with pleasure. As to my leaving you of my own free-will, that is—begging your pardon—impossible and absurd."

He laughed again, and shot another of his startling looks at me.

"Very well, young sir, I have nothing more to say. Come with us to the farmhouse to-morrow: there's plenty of room there, and they are used to being accommodating. Stay with us until you're satisfied, and then—don't forget your promise."

He rose as he finished speaking, and flung away the remains of his cigar.

"Good-night," he said, holding out his large, well-shaped hand.

"Good-night; and thanks for your confidence, which you will never regret, Mr. Birchmore."

"Qui vivra, verra!" was all his answer, as he walked away, with his hands in his coat-pockets and his singular short steps.

He was an enigma, sure enough, and yet my belief in him was as intuitive and inalienable as in Kate herself. His mysterious hints and warnings were powerless to disturb me: I trusted in the ability of us three combined to overthrow any antagonist. I sat late beneath the trees, smoking and brooding over my passion, as young men will, and ever and anon glancing up at a certain window, behind the lamp-illumined curtain of which I had reason to suppose my darling was. Was she thinking of me now? Even as I asked myself this, and gazed upward, a shadow fell upon the curtain; it

was pushed aside, and the window was swung back on its hinges.

With a throb of the heart I sprang to my feet, and wafted a kiss from my finger-tips toward the face that peeped out upon me. Stay! was it Kate's face, after all? The arms and shoulders now appeared, and the form leaned upon the window-sill. A lucifer-match flashed, and I had the pleasure of beholding the sinister visage of Mr. Slurk lit up by a sulphurous gleam, as he leisurely lit his pipe and stared down at me.

"Schöne gute Nacht, Herr Gainsborough!"

VI.

We made a late start the next morning, and did not reach the farmhouse before four o'clock. I had little opportunity of speaking to Kate on the way; in fact, the presence of Slurk, who sat on the box of the vehicle, and once in a while threw a glance at us over his shoulder, irritated me to such a degree that more tender sentiments were temporarily pushed into the background. Kate herself, though she attempted to appear cheerful, betrayed signs of inward anxiety and nervousness; while Mr. Birchmore conversed with a volubility and discursiveness greater than I had ever remarked in him before.

The farmhouse stood quite alone on an unfrequented by-road, in a little angle of the hills. It was not exactly a picturesque building, with its four walls covered with rough plaster and pierced with dozens of small windows, and its enormous red-tiled roof, with those quaint, narrow apertures, like half-opened eyes, disclosing a single pane of glass, which do duty as dormers. It stood flush with the road, as German houses are fond of doing; but behind was a large inclosed farm-yard, roughly paved with round stones, and well walled in. The front-door, though rather pretentiously painted and ornamented, with some religious versicle or other written up on the lintel, was not used as a means of entrance or exit. It was, as I afterward discovered, not only locked and bolted, but actually screwed up on the inside; and the only way of getting into the house was by a side-door opening into the court-yard. As the court-yard itself was provided with a heavy gate, you will see that the farmhouse, close to the road though it was, was by no means so easy of ingress or egress as it appeared—supposing, of course, that it was the humor of the inmates to declare a state of siege. I mention these particulars merely by the way: they are common to three houses out of five in this region.

The Birchmores' luggage had, it appeared, already been carried over from the hotel; but a man, in rough peasant's costume, who announced himself as the master of the house, now came out to take charge of my trunk. I was, or fancied myself (as you may have noticed), a quick judge of faces, and this peasant's face failed to commend itself to me. It was at once heavy and gloomy, while a scar at one corner of his mouth caused that feature to twist itself into a perfunctory grimace, grotesquely at variance with his normal expression. In person he was much above the common size, and, to judge by the ease with which he slung my heavy trunk over his shoulder, he must have been as strong as August der Starke himself, whose brazen statue domineers over the market-place in Dresden.

"Guten Morgen, Herr Rudolph!" said Slurk, hailing this giant affably. The two seemed to be on some sort of terms of comradeship, having, perhaps, struck up an acquaintance during the previous negotiations for lodgings. I must say they looked to me to be a not ill-matched pair.

We alighted, and were welcomed in with surly courtesy by Herr Rudolph. Kate, confessing to a headache, went at once to her room, whence she did not again emerge; Slurk disappeared into the kitchen regions with the landlord; Mr. Birchmore presently went out for a stroll before dinner; and I, finding myself thrown temporarily on my own resources, decided to make a virtue of my loneliness by writing some letters which had been long owing. I accordingly groped my way up the darksome stone staircase, and so along an eccentric passage to my room.

I did not know then, nor could I, even now, accurately describe, the arrangement of rooms in that farmhouse. There were at least three separate passages, not running at right angles to one another, but seeming to wander about irregularly, now and then turning awkward corners, descending or ascending short flights of steps, or eddying into a little *cul-de-sac*, with, perhaps, only a closet-door at the end of it. The consequence was, it was nearly impossible to say whose room adjoined whose. It might be a long distance from one to another, measured along the passage, and yet they might actually be separated only by the thickness of a wall. Where the farmer and his family slept I know not, but I have reason to believe that all our party, including Slurk, were accommodated upon the same floor.

On opening the door of my room, I found some one already there. This person was a comely young woman, the farmer's daughter evidently, busy in the benevolent occupation of putting things in order. She had moved my trunk beneath the window, she had put fresh water in the ewer, she had straightened out the slips of drugget on the rough board floor, she had placed some flowers in the window, and she was now engaged in tucking a clean sheet on the bed. I said she was comely; on second looks, she was better than that. She was positively pretty, with the innocent, blond prettiness of some German peasant-girls. Her fair hair, smoothed compactly over her small head and wound up in a funny little pug behind, possessed a faint golden lustre; her eyes were of as pure and serene a blue as any I ever looked upon; her smooth cheeks, slightly browned by much sunshine which had rested on them, were tinged with healthful bloom; her mouth might have been smaller, but the full lips were well shaped, and there were white, even teeth behind them. Her figure, like that of most Saxon peasant-girls of her age, was robust and vigorous; she wore a simple bodice and skirt, and her feet and legs were

bare. Altogether I thought her a very agreeable apparition.

"Good-morning, honored Herr Gainsborough," she said, gravely, in German, as I entered.

"Good-morning, pretty maiden," returned I, gallantly. "You seem to know my name, though I don't know yours—what is it?"

"I am called Christina—Christina Rudolph. It is some time since I have known Herr Gainsborough's name," she added.

"Really! how comes that?" I asked, by no means displeased.

"The honored Herr has been kind to a relation of mine—a very near relation," replied Christina, with the same gravity.

"Have I? I'm glad to hear it! Was she as pretty as thou?" inquired I, venturing upon the familiar form of address.

She blushed, and answered:

"It was not a woman—it was my brother."

"Oh, thy brother! And where did I meet thy brother?"

"In Paris, Herr Gainsborough."

"In Paris! Rudolph! What, art thou the sister of Heinrich Rudolph, who lives in the Latin Quarter, and is considered the cleverest jeweler in the city?"

"Yes, honored Herr," returned Christina, smiling for the first time, and showing her pretty teeth, and a dimple on either cheek. "My brother Heinrich cut and arranged the diamonds in the *parure* of the honored Herr's mother."

"So he did, Christina, and he did it better than any one except him could have done it. And so thou art really his sister! How did he tell thee of me?"

"He wrote to me while you were still in Paris, and described the pretty stones, and told how Herr Gainsborough used to come and sit with him, and see him work, and talk a great deal with him."

"Yes, he was well worth talking with! And I remember now that he said he was born in this neighborhood, and that he had a sister and a father living here. It was stupid of me not to have thought of that when I heard your name. Well, Christina, I'm afraid I wasn't of much use to him after all. I tried to get him customers, but I knew very few people in Paris; and the only person I did succeed in introducing to him— By-the-way! it was this gentleman who is with me now."

"Herr Birchmore; yes, my brother spoke also of him," said Christina, her gravity returning. "But he did not speak of the young lady, or of the servant."

"No, I believe they weren't with him at the time. I only met them myself since I came to Schandau."

"The young lady is Herr Birchmore's—wife?"

"His wife? Dear heavens, no! His daughter, of course, Christina."

Christina said nothing, being occupied in neatly smoothing out the pillow, and laying the wadded counterpane over the sheet.

"Will Herr Gainsborough stay with us long?" she asked, after a pause.

"As long as Herr Birchmore does, I suppose," said I, carelessly.

"And Herr Birchmore's daughter!" subjoined Christina, with a twinkle of mischief so demure that I could hardly be sure whether she meant it or not.

"Thou art as clever as thy brother, Christina," I laughed, coloring a little too, however, I dare say. "It is true I have not known them long, but—but people see a good deal of one another in traveling together."

"I have heard it said that traveling makes people acquainted with—" she paused, and looked down thoughtfully at her bare feet. Presently she lifted her blue eyes straight to mine and asked: "Herr Gainsborough has his diamonds with him?"

"Undoubtedly! They are never away from me."

"In going about this place, the Herr should be cautious. Some of these hills and valleys are very lonely. There are spots, not far from here, where no one goes for sometimes many months."

"Well, I'll be very careful, Christinchen," I rejoined, laughing, and in truth not a little amused at the care my friends took of me. "But thou must remember that no one in Germany, except Herr Birchmore, and his daughter, and thyself, knows that any such diamonds as these are in existence—much less that they are in my pocket!"

Christina raised her finger to her lips, as if to caution me to speak lower. "There is at least one other who knows—the man Slurk!" she said.

"Well, perhaps he may," I replied, somewhat struck by her observation; "and, as I see thou hast taken a dislike to the fellow, I will confide to thee that I consider him an atrocious brute. But, brute though he is, there's no harm in him of *that* kind. He is an old servant of Herr Birchmore, I believe, and would, of course, be dismissed at once if there were anything serious against him."

"Naturally!" was all Christina's answer; she made no pretense of arguing the point with me. "Adieu, honored sir!" she said, at the door. But, with her hand upon the latch, she paused, turned round, and added, rather confusedly, "Will Herr Gainsborough go on any expedition with his friends to-day?"

"Why, I hardly think so, Christina."

"But to-morrow, perhaps?" she persisted, lifting her blue eyes to mine again.

"Perhaps," I admitted, with a smile.

"Then—if he can trust me—would the Herr mind leaving the diamonds with me until he comes back again?"

"Nay, Christinchen, I cannot give them up, even to thee, and although I trust thee as much as thy brother, or myself. But thou mightst lose them; and, if they are to be lost at all, I would rather the responsibility should be mine. Besides," I continued, showing my revolver, "I go always with this. But I thank thee all the same, Christinchen, and I would like to do something—to—"

I stepped toward her: the fact is, I suppose I meant to kiss her. But her expression changed in a manner not encouraging to such an advance; she looked both grave and hurt, and I paused.

"I was going to say—if thou wouldst like to see the diamonds, it would give me great pleasure to show them to thee."

"Many thanks, honored sir; I would rather not." And, with a formal courtesy, the fair-haired little maid opened the door and disappeared, leaving me feeling rather foolish.

"The pretty peasant has a pride of her own!" I said to myself, as I opened my trunk and got out my writing-materials. "She's actually offended because I wouldn't constitute her guardian of thirty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds. Good gracious! why, that father of hers, if I know anything of faces, would cut all our throats for as many groschen. But what an unmistakable scamp my friend Slurk must be to have aroused the suspicions of such an innocent, unsophisticated little creature as Christinchen! By Jove, though, anybody might be suspicious of a leer and a slouch like his! What if there should be anything in it? Just suppose such a thing for a moment, eh? It's impossible, to be sure; but the impossible does sometimes happen. How on earth did Birchmore ever happen to have such a fellow about him? I tell you I've always had a notion that he may be at the bottom of all this mystery that Birchmore and Kate are so much exercised by. Now, what if he—but pshaw!

"There is one thing I'm resolved to do, however," I continued, to myself, as I settled down with paper, pens, and ink, at the table in the window. "I'll buttonhole Birchmore this very afternoon, and get out of him everything he knows about his precious valet. It can do no harm to have the matter cleared up. The thing is absurd, of course; still, the situation out here is rather lonely; and with two such lovely neighbors as Papa Rudolph and Slurk—*par nobile fratrum*—it may be well to be on the safe side. Yes, that shall be cleared up to-day!"

Having arrived at this sapient determination, I set to work writing my letters, and scribbled away diligently for an hour or two. At length, as I was looking vacantly up from my paper, at a loss for something interesting to set down upon it, my eyes happened to rest upon the pane of my open window.

Like nearly all German windows, it opened inward on hinges, instead of running up and down in grooves. The pane on my left, therefore, having the dark room as a background, acted as a mirror of the sunlit landscape outside on the right, showing me a portion thereof which was directly invisible to me from where I sat, and to any person standing in which I must myself be invisible.

Now, my window was on the southern side of the house, which fronted westward on the road. On the opposite side of the road was a narrow strip of land planted with vegetables, and above this rose the abrupt side of a hill, ascended by a winding path partly hidden by the trees. I could not see this hill and path without leaning out of the window and looking toward the right; but a considerable part of it was reflected in my window-pane mirror, and could thus be readily observed without rising from my chair. Happening, then, as I said, to cast my eyes upon this mirror, I saw two persons standing together on the path upon the hill-side, and conversing in a very animated manner.

I had no difficulty in recognizing them: they were Mr. Birchmore and his valet. So far there was nothing surprising in the spectacle. That which did surprise and even astonish me, however, was the mutual bearing of the two men toward each other.

I have already mentioned the peremptory tone in which Mr. Birchmore uniformly addressed the man Slurk, and the generally overbearing attitude he assumed toward him; but in the conversation now going forward all this was changed. To judge by appearances, I should have said that Slurk was the master and Mr. Birchmore the valet. The former was gesticulating forcibly, and evidently laying down the law in a very decided and autocratic way. His square, ungainly figure seemed to dilate and take on a masterful and almost hectoring air; while Mr. Bichmore stood with his hands in his coat-pockets, undemonstrative and submissive, apparently accepting with meekness all that the other advanced, and only occasionally interpolating a remark or a suggestion, to which Slurk would pay but slight or impatient attention. Both were evidently talking in a low tone; for, though they were not more than fifty or sixty yards from where I sat, I could not catch a single word, nor even so much as an inarticulate murmur, unless by deliberately straining my ears. But I did not need nor care to hear anything: what I saw was quite enough to startle and mystify me.

After a few minutes the two interlocutors moved slowly on up the path, and were soon beyond the field of my mirror. But the unexpected scene which I had witnessed did not so soon pass out of my mind.

I got up from my table and began walking about the room, with the restlessness of one who cannot make his new facts tally with his preconceived ideas. Who and what was Slurk, and how had he obtained ascendency over a man like Birchmore? Certainly it could not be a natural ascendency. Birchmore must have put himself in the other's power. In other words, Slurk must be blackmailing him. And this was the trouble, was it?—this was the mystery? It was an ugly and awkward business, certainly; but the main question remained after all unanswered. What was it that Birchmore had done to give Slurk a hold upon him? and had that act, whatever it was, compromised his daughter along with him? For, now that I gathered up in my memory all the hints and signs which had come under my notice in relation to this affair, I could not help thinking that Kate's attitude had in it something suggestive of more than mere filial sympathy with her father's misfortune. In that misfortune or disgrace she had a personal and separate in addition to a sympathetic share. And yet, in what conceivable way could a

low villain like Slurk fasten his gripe upon a pure and spotless young girl? and what a hideous thought—that such a girl should be in any way at his mercy! The more I turned the matter over in my mind, the more ugly did it appear. No wonder that father and daughter had warned me away. Some men in my position, having seen thus far, might have shrunk back and given up the enterprise. But I was not in that category. I was more than ever determined to see the adventure to its end—nay, to gain my own end in it, too. The conditions of the contest were, at all events, narrowing themselves down to recognizable form. It was to be a trial of strength mainly between myself and Slurk—between an educated, plucky Englishman, and a base German ruffian—between one, moreover, who had right, moral and legal, on his side, and love as his goal—and one armed only with underhand cunning and terrorism, and aiming at nothing higher than the extortion of money. This was the way I read the situation, and I flattered myself that I was equal to the emergency.

Upon consideration, however, I decided to alter my intention of asking Mr. Birchmore about his valet. It was tolerably clear that he was not in a position to give me any information; and, besides, I had already learned everything except the particulars. Those particulars, if I did not succeed in discovering them unaided, must be extracted from Kate. She would not withhold them from me if I questioned her resolutely and directly, enforcing my inquiries with disclosure of the knowledge I had already obtained. This, then, should be my next step. I sealed up my letters, locked them in my desk, and, it being now nearly seven o'clock, I went down to supper.

VII.

BUT at supper there was no Kate; Mr. Birchmore and I were served by Christina, while the voices of Slurk and our landlord could be heard in the kitchen. My conversation was naturally somewhat constrained; Mr. Birchmore had a good deal to say about some excursion which he had in view for the morrow, but I failed to pay very close attention to his remarks. Once, however, I caught Christina's eyes fixed upon me, and smiled as I remembered her warnings respecting the supposed danger of solitary rambles.

After supper I felt more restless than ever. Mr. Birchmore brought out his invariable cigars, expecting me to join him in a smoke; but I was not in the mood for it, neither did I feel at ease in his company until things should have begun to look a little more comprehensible. I left him, therefore, and wandered aimlessly about outside the house, exploring the farm yard and buildings, and then coming round to the road, and pacing up and down on a beat about a quarter of a mile in length. It was a clear, moonlight night, and so warm as to be almost oppressive. At length I returned to the house, it being then after nine o'clock. Mr. Birchmore had apparently retired; Christina was nowhere to be seen; so I got a lamp from my surly landlord, and found my way without much difficulty to my own chamber.

The warmth within-doors was still more oppressive than outside. I opened both the windows, drew up my bed between them, and placed the table with the lamp on it near the bed's head. I had previously thrown off my coat and waistcoat, and laid them across one end of the table. The diamonds were still in the pocket of the coat; I intended taking them out before going to sleep, and putting them under my pillow, or in some equally secure place. My revolver I also placed beside the lamp. Then, having provided myself with a book out of my trunk, and drawn the bolt of the door, I reclined on the outside of the bed and began to read.

I could not, however, fix my mind upon the page. First my attention and then my eyes would wander; I took a futile and absurd interest in scrutinizing all the details of the room. I recollect them distinctly now. The walls were not papered, but the plaster was washed over with a dark-gray tint, which rubbed off on the fingers, and the uniformity of which was relieved by vertical bands of dull red, painted at intervals of about five feet from floor to ceiling. The ceiling was low—about eight feet from the floor—and whitewashed. In one corner stood the china stove, a glistening, pallid structure, of plain tiles, built up four-square nearly to the top of the room. On the side of the room opposite the two windows and the bed was fastened a tall looking-glass, formed of three plates set one above the other, edge to edge, in such a manner as painfully to cut up and distort whatever was reflected in them. In front of the looking-glass was a liliputian wash-stand, and beside it a straight-legged chair without rungs—in a word, a room more utterly devoid of every kind of picturesque or ornamental attraction could not be imagined; yet I could not keep my eyes from vacantly traversing and retraversing its vacancy. The door was behind me, as I lay turned toward the little table on which the lamp stood, but I could see the free edge of it brokenly reflected in the mirror, with the cracked black porcelain latch-handle, and the iron bolt which I had shot into its place.

I was anything but sleepy; the heat, and the pest of midges and beetles which the light attracted in through the windows, would have sufficed to keep me awake even had my mind been at ease. In order to disperse the insects I finally extinguished the lamp; the moonlight in the room was so bright that I could almost have seen to read by it. I closed the book, however, and, clasping my hands under my head, I gave myself up to meditation. Not a sound of any kind was audible except the muffled ticking of the watch in my waistcoat-pocket, and the faint rustle of the pillow as I breathed. The white moonlight seemed to augment the stillness; the whole great night, and the house with it, seemed silently and intently listening; and at length I found myself listening intently, too! For what? I could not tell; but I listened nevertheless.

By-and-by, I fancied a sound came—a sound from somewhere within the house. It was a very

faint sound, and did not come again; but it was such as might have been caused by the light pressure of a foot in one of the passages outside. Instinctively I reached forth my hand and laid hold of my revolver; but I did not rise from the bed, nor otherwise alter my position. I still lay as if asleep, with the revolver in one hand, the other beneath my head, and my eyes fixed upon the edge of the door, which was obscurely visible in the mirror.

Several minutes passed thus, and there was no return of the noise. Then I saw the handle of the door move and turn. The latch clicked slightly; the door, bolted though it was, opened as if on oiled hinges, admitting an indistinct figure in a long robe of soft gray. So much I saw in the mirror. Then the door was closed again, and the figure, advancing toward the bed, ceased to be reflected in the glass. It advanced close to the bed, and paused there a moment; I could hear its deep, regular breathing. All this time I had not moved, but lay with my back turned, feigning slumber.

Presently the figure passed round the foot of the bed, and came up the other side. The full white light of the moon fell upon it. It was Kate, as I had known it was from the first moment she entered the room. She was clad in a dressing-gown of soft flowing material, which was fastened at the throat, and trailed on the ground. It had wide sleeves, one of which fell back from the bare, smooth arm and hand that carried a lamp. The lamp was not lighted. Her black hair hung down on her shoulders, and on each side of her pale face. Her eyes were wide open, but fixed and vacant. Her breathing was long and measured, as of one sound asleep.

She put the lamp down on the table beside mine, and then stood quite still in the moonlight, her face wholly expressionless and without motion. It was an appalling thing to see her thus. I, too, remained motionless, but it was because I knew not what to do. To awaken her might bring on the worst consequences. If she were not disturbed, she might possibly retire as quietly and unconsciously as she had come. But the mystery of her being there at all appeared utterly inexplicable. What had led her, in her trance, to visit my room? how had she ever known where it was? What had she dreamed of doing here? and, above all, how had she contrived to enter through a bolted door with as much ease as though she had been a spirit? Perhaps this was but a spirit—or a phantom of my own brain! Was I awake?

She stretched out her hand, not following its motion with her eyes, but mechanically, and, as it were, involuntarily. She laid it on my coat—on the pocket which contained the diamonds. Then, slowly and deliberately, and still with averted face and eyes, and that long-drawn, slumberous breathing, she unbuttoned the fastenings one after one, and her soft, tapering fingers closed upon the case.

Meanwhile, my mind had been rapidly canvassing all the *pros* and *cons* of action; and I had come to the conclusion that it would be better for her that I should interfere. Of my personal interest in the matter I believe I did not think; indeed, knowing that the diamonds would not be lost, there was no reason why I should. But it would not do to risk compromising Kate. It was dangerous enough that she should be here at all; but that she should carry away the diamonds with her was inadmissible. I rose from my bed, and laid my hand gently on her wrist.

She was no spirit, but warm flesh and blood. For a few moments the restraint in which I held her seemed to baffle and distress her; I fancied I could feel her pulse beat under my fingers; a kind of spasm crossed her face, her eyelids quivered, and the eyes moved in their sockets. Then her breathing became irregular, and caught in her throat in a kind of sob. The moment of awakening was evidently at hand, and I dreaded its coming, lest she should scream out, and rouse the house. But, fortunately, she uttered no sound. Slowly speculation grew within her eyes; she fixed them on me, first with an expression of strange pleasure, soon changing to bewilderment and fear. Then, with a cry that was none the less thrilling because it was a whisper, she drooped forward into my arms. It was a delicious moment, for all its peril.

"You are perfectly safe," I whispered in her ear; "only make no noise."

"Tom," she said, suddenly freeing herself from my arms, and putting a hand on either shoulder, while her wild, black eyes searched my face, "you understand—you don't think—?"

"Of course I understand, my poor darling!"

"What shall I do—what shall I do? Let me kill myself!"

With a motion swift as the glide of a serpent, she reached toward the revolver, which I had left on the bed. I was barely in time to catch her arm. The look in the girl's face at that moment was terrible.

"Let me!—I will!"

"Hush, Kate! You never shall."

"Oh, what shall I do?" she murmured again, slipping down on her knees, and running both hands through her thick, black hair. "Tom, if you loved me you would kill me!"

"Kate, every one in the house is asleep. You can go back to your room, and no one know. Only be calm."

"And no one know? You think that?"

"I am sure of it!"

"I know better! Some one knows it now—he made it happen!"

"Don't kneel there, dear. You're not yourself yet. You don't know what you're saying."

I said this reassuringly, but her words had inspired me with a vague alarm that I ventured not to define. I brought a chair and made her sit upon it, and sat down beside her.

"Not here!" she whispered, drawing back out of the moonlight into the shadow. "Come here, Tom. He may be looking!"

"Why, Kate, who can see us here? The door is shut."

"Oh—why was not the door bolted?"

"It was. I can't conceive how you opened it."

"Oh, the villain! how I hate him!"

"Kate, I love you, and whoever you hate must have to do with me."

"You can do nothing—no one can do anything!—unless you'll help me to kill him!"

"Whom? Do you mean Slurk?—tell me that!"

"Yes!" she answered, with a shiver; not looking me in the face, but with her hands clasped tight between her knees. "I do mean—him!"

"Now tell me all that he has done, dear," said I, quietly. "I must know everything; and then I promise you that you shall be freed from him."

"He is my master!" she said, in a frightened whisper. "He has been so ever so long! He makes me do what he will; he sent me here to-night. He shames me and destroys me—he loves to do it! He makes me sleep, and then I cannot help myself. I wake, and find it done; and he has no mercy."

"Why does he do this?"

"It was when I was only a little girl that he first got that power over me. He knew my father was rich, and he wanted me to be promised to him for his—you know what, Tom. Then my father put me in the convent, and I staid there seven years, till we thought he had lost the power, or was dead, perhaps. But he found me in America, and made me come back; and now it's worse than ever."

"Why doesn't your father have him arrested and imprisoned? It can be done."

"Oh, my poor father! He cannot, Tom; do not ask me that!"

"I must ask it, Kate. Remember, I love you! Why is it?"

"My father is afraid of him, too," she said, chafing one hand with the other with a piteous expression of pain. "If he did anything against him, he would be ruined. My father cannot help me, Tom."

"But I do not understand. What has your father done that he should be afraid of such a scoundrel as Slurk?" I demanded, sternly.

She hesitated long before answering, moving her hands and head restlessly, and fetching many troubled sighs. At last she laid her hand shrinkingly on mine, and I grasped it firmly.

"I will tell you, Tom," she said, in a faltering voice; "but you know I would tell no one in the world but you. My dear papa did not do wrong himself; but there were people connected with him who did, and made the blame seem to be his. And there were some papers of my papa's which—which—oh—"

"Yes, yes, I understand, darling; and Slurk stole the papers?"

"Yes—that is—no; it was worse than that, for he didn't know where the papers were kept—no one knew that but I. Tom, he made me sleep, and in my sleep he made me go to the place where they were, and take them out, and give them to him. He made me rob my own father—put my own dear papa in his hateful power. I would rather have died! And papa forgave me—think of that!"

"Then Slurk has the papers in his possession? and he uses them for blackmail? But have you never thought of trying to—it sounds badly, but it would be perfectly justifiable—to steal them back again?"

"I can do nothing. He can make me helpless by a look; and he always carries them with him. But, Tom, if it could be done without being found out, I would tell papa to kill him. But I cannot let my dear papa be hanged for that wretch; and, you see, we have no evidence."

"Good God! What a fearful thing it is!" I muttered. What help, what consolation, could I offer? A refined and sensitive girl under the mesmeric control of a ruffian; her father subject to his extortions and insults; and the only escape a worse misery even than this—Kate to yield herself to him in marriage! Faugh! the thought sickened me; but it enraged me, too! Kate was right—death, sudden and merciless, was the proper measure to be meted out to Slurk. If he had appeared at that moment, I believe I would have shot him unhesitatingly, and rejoiced in the deed. Murder would be a righteous work when wrought on such as he; and if the murder were brought home to me could I suffer in a better cause?

Kate had risen slowly from her chair, and was now fronting me, scanning my face and bearing with curious eagerness. She held her hands across her bosom, alternately interlacing the tips of the fingers and pulling them free again. Her lips moved as if in speech, but no sound came from them.

I got up presently, looking I dare say very solemn, as indeed I felt. Her eyes followed mine as I rose; and now we gazed straight at each other for some moments.

"I promised you that you should be freed," I said, "and you shall be. I shall be sorry to have any man's blood on my hands; but if you can be saved in no other way it must be so."

"You do love me indeed!" she murmured, with a sort of sad exultation in her tone. But she added: "I cannot let you do it. I cannot lose you, even to be freed from him. It is my father's fault, after all. Besides—"

"I take it upon myself," interrupted I, with a dignity which may have been absurd, but which did not seem so to me at the time.

"But it would be murder—at any rate, the law would call it so. No, you must not be called a murderer, Tom. But I—they would not hang a woman—let me do it! I should love to do it!"

And she spoke with a look that confirmed the words.

Before I could reply, however, her expression changed again. She appeared to think intensely for a few moments, and then her face lighted up. Suddenly she caught my hand and kissed it.

"And kiss me, Tom!" she cried, excitedly. "Kiss me, for I deserve it! I have thought of a way that will save us all!"

Much startled, and half fearing that the girl's mind had given way under the pressure of trouble, I was attempting to quiet her; but she silenced me

by an impetuous gesture, and went on speaking eagerly and rapidly.

"To-morrow we had planned to go to Kohlstein for a picnic. It's a great, immense rock, where robbers lived hundreds of years ago. Hardly any one ever goes there now. I have been there, and I remember that on the top it is full of deep clefts and holes; and I thought how, if any one were to fall into one, they might lie there for months without being found; and they could never get out of themselves. So now—listen! We will go up there—you and I and—he; and I will lead him near the brink of one of those clefts, and then you must rush forward, and take him, and drop him down—down to the bottom! So we shall get what we want, and yet there need be no murder."

"Not be murder, Kate?"

"It need not be; for when he was safe down there, rather than be left to starve, he would give up those papers. Don't you think he would?"

She was trembling with excitement, and her state communicated itself in some degree to me, so that I was scarcely able to think coherently. But there certainly seemed to be plausibility in her scheme; at the worst it would be better than shooting the man outright. But would the recovery of the papers put an end to Slurk's persecution of Kate as well as of her father? Would not his power over her remain?

"But we can have him imprisoned then, you see," was her answer to my objection; "and for fear of that he would never dare to trouble me again. He would have been in prison long ago but for the papers."

"It certainly seems a good plan," I said, after a confused attempt to turn the matter over in my mind. "We'll ask your father's opinion to-morrow."

"Oh, he must know nothing of it!" she exclaimed, with a gesture of vehement dissent. "He would betray it. You don't know how—what a power that villain has over him. Slurk treats him like a child when they are alone. No, Tom; we must do it all ourselves, or it will fail. Only when it is done will dear papa get back his courage."

I knew more about how Mr. Birchmore was treated by his valet in private than Kate was aware; but I made no allusion to this. The more I reflected upon the enterprise, the more inclined I was to assent to it. It was wild, fantastic, unconventional; but it had important practical merits nevertheless. Moreover, it possessed the powerful recommendation (as I deemed it) of allowing for a fair man-to-man struggle between Slurk and myself. I was to overpower him by main strength; and from what I had observed of the fellow I fancied he would be able to make just resistance enough to save my self-respect. On the other hand, he might be able to do more than this; and, if the worst came to the worst, of course I might be compelled to maim him with my revolver. But, altogether, the prospect kindled my imagination; I was stimulated by the thought of distinguishing myself by my personal prowess before my mistress's eyes, in conflict with her dastardly oppressor. And as I looked at her standing there before me, so lovely and full of courageous fire, I said to myself that no knight of yore ever did battle in the lists for a worthier lady-love.

However, I realized that this was neither the place nor the hour to enter upon a detailed discussion of our plans. Every moment that Kate remained with me increased her peril, especially if, as she seemed to think was the case, Slurk had dispatched her hither. As to his motive in so doing, I had no difficulty in forming an opinion. There was little doubt that he meant to use her as an unconscious cat's-paw to steal the diamonds, as before to purloin the papers compromising her father. Had I been asleep, the device could hardly have failed of success. But as Kate seemed herself not to suspect the real nature of her involuntary errand, I would not additionally distress her by alluding to it; it was enough that it furnished me with a sufficient pretext, had others been wanting, for inflicting chastisement on the valet.

Kate said, in answer to my inquiry as to the proposed time of our starting on the picnic-expedition the next day, that it would probably be about eleven in the forenoon; we would, therefore, have ample time to settle the particulars of our scheme before the hour of action arrived. At parting she clung to me with peculiar tenderness; nor had I ever loved her so well as at that moment, when I looked forward to liberating her forever from the evil spell that had been blighting her young life.

After she had gone I had the curiosity to examine the bolt on the door. The explanation of its mysterious opening proved simple enough. The screws whereby the socket of the bolt had been fastened to the door-frame had been removed, and the holes so enlarged that they could be slipped in and out without difficulty. Socket and screws had then been replaced, so that the bolt could be shot as readily as before. But the security was only an illusion; for, the latch being turned, a slight push would bring away the socket and screws attached to the bolt; and thus the supposed means of safety be ingeniously used to disguise the real absence thereof.

VIII.

It occurred to me the next morning that, considering the nature of the work that was cut out for me, it might be prudent to depart from my usual custom by leaving the diamonds at home in Christina's charge, as she had herself suggested; and I took the earliest opportunity of mentioning this proposal to Kate. To my surprise, she at once expressed a decided dissent from the arrangement, and, indeed, seemed so much perturbed by it that I at once relinquished the idea. But I begged her to tell me the reasons of her objection.

"Not now," she said, hastily; "I hear papa coming; wait till after breakfast, and then you shall know."

We were standing at the gate of the court-yard, breathing the fresh morning air. She left me, and returned to the house, whence Mr. Birchmore al-

most immediately issued, and saluted me with more than his usual cordiality. I wondered what his behavior would have been had he known of the transactions of the past night, or of what was in store for us during the day. He began to talk about Kohlstein, and related several anecdotes of the bandits by whom it was said formerly to have been inhabited.

"I have been up there more than once," he remarked, "and the traces of their occupation are still visible. I remember one feature that particularly impressed me—a narrow cleft or chasm of considerable depth, into which the old fellows are said to have thrown their prisoners when they became refractory."

"Would the fall kill them?"

"I should say not; the bottom seemed full of chopped brushwood and other such rubbish. But no human being could have got out unaided; and probably a day or two's lonely sojourn there would bring the most resolute malcontent to terms. It would be a ghastly fate to fall in there nowadays, and have one's skeleton fished out again the following year, perhaps, and a sensational paragraph in the newspapers. You young folks must pick your steps carefully to-day."

"Forewarned is forearmed!" rejoined I, with a short laugh. Further conversation was cut short by a summons to breakfast. On this occasion Slurk waited at table, and I observed him with more than usual attention and toleration, as one with whom I was so soon to try desperate conclusions. He was certainly a villainous-looking character; but he appeared to be, for reasons best known to himself, in excellent spirits this morning; a circumstance which stirred up an unwilling kind of compassion within me, reflecting what a speedy and final end was going to be put to all his possibilities of enjoyment. Vile though his life had been, it was the only one he had.

Kate likewise had the semblance of unusual gayety, but I could see that it was either feigned or the result of nervous excitement. And my judgment was justified when, after breakfast, she overtook me as I was on the way up-stairs to my room to make my final preparations, and said, in a voice unsteady with emotion:

"Tom, dear, you asked me why you might not leave your diamonds with Christina. You do not know what danger you were in last night! On my way back to my room I heard two people talking together, and they mentioned your name, so I stopped and listened. One said: 'The bolt is all right; I had better go in and risk it; he'll be certain to be asleep by this time!' And then the other said: 'He has his revolver; leave it to me; he believes he can trust me. To-morrow, when he goes out, I'll get him to leave them with me for safety!' and then they both laughed. My darling, this house is a den of thieves!"

"Were the persons you heard—who were they?"

"Christina, and that creature she calls her father. Hush! there she comes. She must not see us together;" and in a moment Kate had glided away. I went on up the stairs with a heavy heart. I would almost rather not have heard this last revelation; my confidence in my penetration had received a humiliating shock. To think that Christina's innocent face and modest, maidenly air concealed the heart of a thief, or, worse still, of a decoy-duck, was a blow to my vanity as well as to my faith in human nature. How artful she had been, when I fancied her most ingenuous and kind! And then it all at once flashed upon me—what if Heinrich Rudolph himself were in the plot! what if he had written them to be on the lookout for me! and what if Slurk, being secretly in league with him, had contrived to get the Birchmores, and me along with them, into this house, intending to divide the spoil with Herr Rudolph and Christina! Many signs seemed to point to this as a true deduction from the circumstances; and, even as I was rather grimly considering the matter, a new confirmation of Kate's discovery awaited me. Christina was standing at my room-door, and, as I came up, she courtesied and said:

"I was wishing to speak a moment to Herr Gainsborough, if he would permit me."

"What do you want?" I asked, somewhat roughly.

"Does the honored Herr remember what I said yesterday—?"

"That you wished me to give you my diamonds for safe-keeping? Yes; and I have to answer that I am not quite so trustful as you seem to think!"

The scornful and severe tone in which I spoke evidently startled her; but she still affected not to understand.

"It was for Herr Gainsborough's own sake—" she began, but I interrupted her.

"Do you remember what *I* said yesterday?—that I went armed; well, I am armed to-day, and whoever tries to teach me how to take care of my diamonds may happen to get a bullet instead: so let him beware. If Herr Rudolph is anxious about me, you can tell him that!"

"Herr Gainsborough will be sorry to have spoken so," said Christina, coloring deeply, and with tremulous lip.

"I am sorry to have to say it, Christina. But, can you tell me how the bolt of this door came to be in this condition?" and I pulled out the loose socket as I spoke, and the screws fell to the floor.

"Indeed, I did not know this!" exclaimed she; but the dismay and confusion which were but too plainly visible on her face belied her words.

"You will understand, however, that a house whose fastenings are so much out of order would not be a proper place to keep treasures in. Well, good-by, Christina. I am going to Kohlstein, and probably I sha'n't spend another night here. When you write to your brother in Paris, you may tell him that the diamonds are quite safe, though they may have been in danger."

"Will Herr Gainsborough let me say one word?"

"It's too late—I have no time," returned I, with an emphasis all the more coldly contemptuous

because of the secret inclination I felt—in view of her youth and prettiness—to be compassionate and forgiving; and perhaps I was half sorry that she attempted no further self-vindication, but, obeying my gesture of dismissal, passed out of the door and down the passage, with her bare feet, and her blue eyes downcast, and no backward glance. When she was gone, I shut the door in no enviable mood, and walked to and fro about my room like a surly bull in a pound. For the first though not for the last time I heartily cursed the diamonds; they seemed to raise the devil wherever I carried them. In the midst of my anathemas Mr. Birchmore knocked at the door, and told me that everything was ready down-stairs for the start.

"And, by-the-by, Gainsborough," he added, with one of his point-blank, icy glances, "I have arranged that our luggage shall be removed to-day; and, if you leave yours here, I advise you to seal it up in my presence. I found the lock of my door in rather a strange condition this morning. I have my own opinion of what our landlord may be."

"Who recommended you to this place, Mr. Birchmore?" I demanded, curtly; for I was getting to feel something like contempt for my intended father-in-law. It is not easy to respect a man who, under whatever stress of circumstances, allows another man to make a slave of him.

"It was that fellow Slurk; and he deserves a good horsewhipping for it!" replied Birchmore, thrusting his hands resolutely into his pockets.

"I think he deserves at least that," I rejoined, with a significant laugh; "and whenever you're inclined to operate on him, I'll stand by you."

Mr. Birchmore said no more, and we went down-stairs in silence. Kate was already seated in the carriage; Slurk was on the box, with a large basket containing our provisions for the day beside him. Mr. Birchmore and I took our places—one of us, at least, with a heavy heart. The landlord stood at the door and nodded us a surly farewell.

"Where is Christina?" I asked him.

"She has gone to the town to sell eggs; did the Herr want anything?"

"I should like to have sent for a screw-driver; but probably I can get one on our way back," was my answer; and with that we drove away.

In about half an hour, proceeding by unfrequented roads, we came in sight of Kohlstein. It was a vast, four-sided mass of gray rock, seamed with deep clefts and fissures running horizontally and vertically, so that it appeared to have been built of gigantic blocks of stone. It was considerably over one hundred feet in sheer height, and it stood upon a rising ground of shifting sand. Slender trees grew here and there out of the crevices of its headlong sides, and straggled nakedly along its level summit, outlined against the sky. It was an ideal place for a robber stronghold; impregnable, certainly, to any attack save that of the heaviest modern artillery.

"We must get out and walk from here," remarked Mr. Birchmore. "There's only one way of getting to the top, and that's on the other side. I have got a touch of my rheumatics to day, and hardly think I shall be able to do the climbing. However, that needn't interfere with you young people, of course."

I exchanged a covert look with Kate as I helped her to descend from the carriage; and she pressed my hand and smiled. I admired her courage as much as I lamented the apparent lack of it in her father. The horse having been unharnessed and tethered where some cool grass grew beside a stream, we struck off across the sandy upland; Slurk carrying the big basket, Mr. Birchmore walking with a rather feeble step near him, and Kate and I in front. It was an even hotter day than yesterday, and the tramp was a wearisome one. By the time we arrived at the foot of the Stein, we were quite ready to rest a few minutes in the shadow of the rock, for coolness and breath.

"No, I can't do it!" said Mr. Birchmore, wiping his forehead and glancing hopelessly up at the narrow white foot-path that seemed to mount almost straight upward to the distant summit. "Just leave me here, with a few sandwiches and a bottle of hock, and I shall do very comfortably till you come back."

It was certainly very arduous work clambering up that ladder-like path, and I doubt whether Kate's determination and mine would have held out, had the motive which urged us been merely one of curiosity. But the top was gained at last, and we threw ourselves down on the dry grass to rest and to be fanned by the welcome breeze that blew there. Slurk placed the basket in a little hollow where some bushes kept off the direct rays of the sun, and stretched himself at full length beside it.

"Now let us walk about," suggested Kate, at length, in an undertone; "we must see what there is to be seen."

We had already arranged all the steps by which we were to proceed to the achievement of our purpose, and we felt that the sooner it was ended now the better. The surface on which we stood, though preserving a general level, was full of irregularities and unevennesses; it was overgrown with low bushes and parched grass, with perhaps half a dozen starved and meagre trees. Here and there the naked rock jutted forth from the thin soil, crumbling and weather-worn, its surface stained in places with dry lichens. The entire table was scarcely two-thirds of an acre in area; and a more forlorn and uncongenial spot it would be hard to find, even in the midst of summer. The cave in which the robbers lived was somewhere lower down; we had passed its entrance on our way up; but it was here, probably, that an outlook was kept over the country, to spy out the approach of victims or of enemies. It struck me that it was hardly worth while to be a bandit, if one must put up with such bleak and unattractive quarters in which to carry on the business.

Kate and I wandered over this barren summit hand-in-hand. The moment was now very near that was to make a great change in the world for both of

us. We felt, somehow, as if we were taking leave of a certain part of our lives then. At least, I remember gazing out across the wide expanse of sunlight country that stretched far away on every side, and wondering whether it would look the same an hour hence. Slurk all the while lay beside his basket, and appeared to be asleep.

We came to the brow of a sort of shelf or shallow declivity, descending which we found ourselves on a lower level by some six or seven feet; and so much of the area as lay behind us ceased to be visible. Advancing a few paces farther, we paused abruptly on the edge of a dark, profound cleft, which gaped right at our feet. It was so narrow that one might easily leap across it at its widest part; but it was so deep that, for all that I could see, it might descend to the very base of the Stein. Peering downward earnestly, however, my eyes, becoming accustomed to the gloom, could dimly discern what seemed to be a bottom at a depth of not more than twenty feet.

"It's an awful thing to do, after all!" I murmured, after a long inspection, looking up at Kate.

"Are you ready?" was all her answer.

"Yes," said I, shamed by her resolution. "Let him come."

She mounted the little ridge, and stood with her graceful figure silhouetted against the blue heavens. I, below, turned up the cuffs of my sleeves and buttoned my coat across my chest.

"Slurk!" called she, in a clear, penetrating tone, "bring the basket here, if you please. We mean to take our luncheon on this side."

She remained standing there, with her back toward me. From my lower position I could not see whether Slurk were answering her summons with alacrity or not; but, since it would be his last opportunity of obeying her orders, I was content to let him take his time. By-and-by he appeared, with the basket on his arm; he descended the ledge, and Kate followed him, with her eyes on me.

"Set it down there, near the edge of this pit; not quite so near, please. Now take hold of him!"

The last words were spoken in a sharp, ringing tone; and at the same moment the girl drew a long knife from beneath the overskirt of her dress, and stood with it in her hand. Surprised at her action, I hesitated half an instant—in that half-instant Slurk had thrown himself toward me and grasped me round the body with his long, powerful arms. Almost simultaneously with his attack, I felt myself borne down by a heavy weight from behind, and my arms pinioned. The struggle for a minute or two was tremendous, but I felt that I was overpowered. A hand was pressing hard against my windpipe. Kate stood there with her knife, a new and strange expression on her face; but she did not stir.

At length a panting voice close to my ear—a voice which I knew well, and which, heard now, so amazed me that I almost ceased to resist—said:

"I've got him safe here, Slurk; have you got his legs?"

A grunt from Slurk intimated that he had.

"Now then, Kittie," continued Mr. Birchmore; "be quick there, will you?"

Kate came toward me with her knife. At that sight I uttered a yell of animal rage, and made one more desperate effort to be free.

"Hold him tight, can't you?" said Kate, in a voice that I scarcely recognized as hers; "I don't want to hurt him."

They mastered me; and then, with a rapidity and deftness that showed the practised professional, Kate made a circular cut through the breast of my coat and drew out the diamonds.

"That's all right," remarked Birchmore. "Now the rope!"

She went to the basket, and took from it a coil of fine rope. The two men threw me upon my face, and bound my arms and my feet securely. I made little resistance, but submitted in sullen silence.

"Don't forget his revolver," said Birchmore, when this was done; and, turning me over, they took the weapon from my pocket.

"How do you feel now, young gentleman?" inquired the fellow, addressing me with a smile. "This is the result of plotting to throw unfortunate valets into deep pits, and of flirting with strange young women. I warned you, you remember, to keep out of our way; but idle curiosity has been your ruin.—Kittie, put on the diamonds; he says they become you!"

Slurk grinned at this sally, but the girl said, moodily: "Don't bother the boy, Jack; he behaved like a gentleman all through; he'd make a great deal better husband than you do! Heigho!"

"Well, captain," continued Birchmore, addressing Slurk in English, "what are your orders? Shall we lower away now, and be off? It's nearly half-past one, and we've a good distance to go before three."

"Listen to me, Mr. Gainsborough," said Slurk, also speaking in English, though with a foreign accent; "we've got what we wanted out of you, and we don't want to do you any more harm than is necessary. But we must have time to get safe away, and to do that we must allow twenty-four hours. We shall leave you at the bottom of this pit, with some provisions; and I shall loosen your arms enough so that you can feed yourself. After we are safe, I shall write to your friends at the farmhouse, who are very honest persons, I believe, and they will come here and get you out. That is the best we can do for you.—Now, then, Jack!"

They loosed the cord a little round my arms; then, taking it by the slack end, they lowered me into that dark chasm until I rested at the bottom. Then I saw Kate's face above the edge, between me and the sky, with something wrapped up in paper in her hand.

"Here's some sandwiches for you, my poor boy," said she. "I'm sorry to say good-by to you in this way, really! But I don't suppose you'd have me now, even if Jack weren't my husband already. Well, good-by. Don't flirt too much with that silly little

Christina when you get out. There are the sandwiches."

She let them fall beside me, nodded, and was gone. I lay on my back, with nothing to look at but the narrow strip of blue sky overhead. It was quite cool where I lay, on a bed of sand and rubbish, and it was still as death. I was buried alive to all intents and purposes, and the chance of my ever being disinterred rested upon a basis of probability so narrow that I judged it wisest not to hope. I lay there, gazing up at the sky, and thinking over my adventure—beginning at the beginning, with my meeting with Birchmore at the hotel, and tracing the progress of the conspiracy step by step to its conclusion here. It was very ingenious, and very well carried out. It had taught me a lesson that I was likely to profit by, if I ever got out.

I don't know how long I lay there—probably but a short time. All at once, another face intervened between me and the sky. It was not Kate's this time; it was a very different one—Christina's.

After peering anxiously downward for several moments, she asked:

"Is Herr Gainsborough there?"

"Yes."

"The Herr is not badly hurt?"

"Not a bit, Christina!"

"Gott sei Dank!" she exclaimed, heartily; and adding: "It is all well; you will be helped out immediately," she vanished.

Soon other faces appeared, with beards and helmets—the faces of the "Polizei." In a few minutes, by the aid of ropes and stout arms, I was drawn up once more to the light of day, blinking like an awkward bat.

Before me stood nearly a dozen persons: a squad of police-officers, with their swords and carbines; Herr Rudolph and Christina; and three prisoners—a woman and two men, whose faces were unpleasantly familiar to me.

Some little official ceremony of identification, and so forth, having been gone through with, we all started for our various places of destination. The trial took place not long afterward in Dresden; the prisoners were all convicted, and sentenced to—I don't care to remember what. They were a dangerous gang of thieves, whom the police of several countries had long been vainly endeavoring to capture. But, meanwhile, I went back to spend the night at the farmhouse of Herr Rudolph. I need not say that I scarcely had the courage to look him and his daughter in the face. Herr Rudolph was a most excellent and blameless person; and as for Christina—! I knew not in what terms to begin my apologies to her.

It appeared that my little friend Heinrich, in Paris, had had his suspicions of the man calling himself Birchmore from the first, and, in writing to his father and sister, had mentioned as much. When, therefore, the Birchmore party unexpectedly turned up at the farmhouse, along with the owner of the diamonds, a good deal of perturbation was created. Afraid openly to warn me, in the absence of direct evidence, Christina had done what she could indirectly to excite suspicions in my mind. Failing in this, the girl had actually gone down to Schandau, on the evening of my interview with Kate in my chamber, and laid her information at the police bureau. The next morning she met the officers by appointment at some distance from the house, and they followed us to Kohlstein. After seeing the whole party of us to the top of the Stein (Birchmore followed a few minutes after myself and the others), they formed a cordon at the foot of the path, and one of their number went up to reconnoitre. Peeping over the edge of the plateau, he saw Birchmore just making his attack, and immediately signaled to those below to approach. Thus it happened that the thieves, as they were making off with their plunder, found themselves confronted by an impassable cordon of six loaded carbines. Resistance was out of the question, and they surrendered at discretion.

"And what can I do, Christina," I said, "to show you how much I thank you? Of course I don't speak of canceling the obligation—that nothing could do; but I should like to leave you something to—to remind you that you saved my life and my diamonds. Would you wear a diamond ring for me, or a pair of ear-rings?"

"No, many thanks, Herr Gainsborough," replied the little maiden, gravely. "You owe me nothing; and, as for diamonds, I shall never like them, since I have seen them the cause of so much trouble and danger."

"But unless you let me do something, Christina, I must think you refuse to forgive me for my inexcusable impertinence and stupidity."

She looked down at her bare feet, and smoothed her apron.

"Well, lieber Herr, I would not like to have you think that, truly; I do forgive you with all my heart; and just before you go away to-morrow—just when you are ready to start—perhaps, if you please, I will ask you for something."

"You shall have it, whatever it is," I answered.

So, the next day, when the drosky was at the door, and my trunk packed and put on the box, I left Herr Rudolph conversing with the driver, and went back into the house to find Christina. She was standing in a shadowy corner of the kitchen, so absorbed in scouring plates that she did not appear to notice me until I spoke.

"I am come to say good-by, and to claim your promise, Christina."

She put down her plate, and blushed, with downcast eyes.

"Herr Gainsborough will not be offended? it is something I have no right to ask—only—it will show I am not unforgiving—and—it would be better for me than the diamonds."

"What is it, dear Christina?"

She looked up in my face, shyly and yet frankly, and said:

"Kiss me!"

IX.

THIS (as nearly us I can recollect it) is the story told me by my friend Tom Gainsborough, as we sat over a decanter of claret after one of his inimitable little dinners. When it was over, I gave a grunt, and flung the butt-end of my cigar into the grate.

"There's one thing I don't understand about this story," I then remarked; "and it has misled me all along. Your description of that creature, Kate—her eyes and eyebrows, complexion, hands, and nationality—all persuaded me it was the present Mrs. Gainsborough. Yet it appears she was nothing of the sort!"

"I should think not, indeed!" exclaimed Tom, laughing. "They are as different, even in appearance, as two straight-browed brunettes could possibly be. It is not my fault if you were misled by a description—you who know so well how incurably vague the best descriptions are. Were you to see them side by side, you would acknowledge that they are as little alike as you and I are. As to the American part of it—the truth is, they were not really Americans at all: Birchmore and the girl were French; and I in my ignorance mistook their French accent for the Yankee twang. When, several years later, I met some real Americans—and married one of them—I realized my error."

"Humph! Well, I dare say you were not more stupid than the majority of your countrymen would have been in your place. But another thing—was all that mesmeric business genuine, or a part of the conspiracy?"

"Conspiracy, of course! It was the stock expedient of the gang—and a very ingenious one, I think; for of course the mesmerized one might turn up anywhere, and, if she were not discovered, well and good; while if she were, all she had to say was that she was in a mesmeric trance. As it happened, the latter alternative occurred in both their attempts on me; but I give the girl credit for turning it off excellently well. In fact, she took a real artistic interest in her business. You see, she had been trained as a rope-dancer in her childhood, and afterward she was on the stage for a time. She certainly had marvelous dramatic talent, and thoroughly enjoyed 'taking a part.' The realistic element that entered into her performances no doubt rendered them much more exciting than ordinary stage-work, and perhaps, sometimes, she almost deceived herself."

"Ah! I should not wonder. Well, and what was the meaning of that confusion about the steamboat and the train, and Birchmore's explanations?"

"A mistake on their part—that's all. Accidents will happen, you know. I dare say my unexpected questions disconcerted them greatly; but I was unsuspicious enough, Heaven knows. What I admire as much as anything in their management of the affair was the skill with which they made me believe, from the outset, that I was forcing my company upon *them*, when in reality it was they who were leading me round by the nose."

"Missus Gainsborough say de tea ready, sah!" said the sable servitor, opening the door.

"Let's go up at once!" I exclaimed, rising from my chair. "I shall hereafter feel a new interest in looking at Mrs. Gainsborough's diamonds!"

MY MUSE.

ONE cold, November day, hooded with rain
And cloaked with gray,
My muse rapped sadly on my window-pane.

"Come in! come in!" I cried; "my fire is red,
And chamber wide,
And banquet of my thought is rarely spread."

But dumb, without the door, the figure stood,
Upon my floor
Casting the shadow of its rain-bound hood.

"Come in! come in!" I cried; "O silent one!
Sit by my side;
The fire is flaming, like a summer sun,

With heat and light; here's gentle, lotos rest
For thy sad plight;
Come, share the rosy dreams of poet's breast."

The rain, like silvery hair, blew in to me;
And thwart the air
There swept a cry, "I cannot come to thee!"

"Come in! come in!" I cried; "thou'st wandered long
And storm defied—
Come in, and I will write thee down in song."

One whisper tearful woke—'twas all I heard—
"Hath poet spoke?
Thou callest me as some warm-nested bird

Calls drenched one to despoil his dainty nest:
'Wait, suffer, toil;'
I come when storms moan through thy own hurt breast."

My fire died down; the threatening shade of eve
Fell like a frown;
I heard the day its dreary night-shroud weave;

Grim shadows lurked, and touched me with dull pain;
The cold wind worked
To ope my lattice, and one rapped again.

"Come in! come in!" I cried, "O wanderer strange!"
A voice replied:
"Sing now thy song for me; the wild time's change

Is in thy soul; I'll sit, and, shivering, wait
For poet's dole;
He only gives who sings attuned to fate!"

OTSEGO LEAVES.

I.

BIRDS THEN AND NOW.

ANY one who has had the happiness of living in a country-home, and on the same ground, during the last twenty years, must naturally have been led to observe the birds flitting about the gardens and lawns of the neighborhood. And it matters little whether that country-home be in a village or among open farms. Many birds are partial to a village-life. The gardens and fruit-trees are an attraction to them. Nay, there are some of the bird-folk who seem really to enjoy the neighborhood of man. Among these are the wrens, the robins, the cat-birds, and, to a certain extent, the humming-birds. These lovely little creatures no doubt enjoy the Eden of the flower-garden, rather than the neighborhood of Adam and Eve. They have no objection to the human race, however they endure our presence. And there can be no doubt that any ten acres of village-gardens will show you many more humming-birds during the midsummer hours between early dawn and the latest glimpse of twilight than can be found in the same extent of wood or meadow. These little creatures take especial delight in flitting about the flower-gardens in the evening, at the very moment when family groups gather on the verandas, and will often fly within arm's-length. They seem proudly conscious that their marvelous flight—rapid, is it not, beyond that of any other earthly creature?—will carry them half the length of the garden before that clumsy being, man, can rise to his feet. Who ever caught a humming-bird in flight? A humming-bird on the wing you may perhaps have captured; more than half their lives would seem to be passed on those quivering wings. They feed on the wing always. Of all the feathered tribe few so well deserve the epithet of birds of the air. Seldom do you see one at rest. While poising itself before some honey-yielding flower with that inconceivably rapid quivering of the wings, the humming-bird may occasionally be caught, but the achievement is not a common one. In actual flight it may be doubted if one ever was caught. Confident in their marvelous power of wing, they linger lovingly about the flower-garden while human forms are very near, and human voices are chatting in varied tones, and no doubt clearly heard by them. Few birds, excepting those belonging to the night, are out so late. They must have a large acquaintance among the fire-flies, the katydids, the gay moths, and the hooting owls. Doubtless the fragrance of the flowers, always more powerful in the dewy evening hours, proves the attraction. They do not, however, always visit the sweetest blossoms, they seldom poise before a rose or a lily, but they know very well that roses and lilies do not live alone; gathering about those queenly flowers, they will be sure to find a brilliant company yielding the sweets they seek. Whatever may be the cause, they are arrant little rovers, in the latest twilight and in the early moonlight. There are, indeed, few hours in the twenty-four when that silent sprite, the humming-bird, may not be found darting to and fro around our village homes.

That delightful singer, the merry house-wren, so delicate in form, so cheery in his ways, so lively, so fearless, so sweet and joyous in his song, is a fast friend of mankind, seeking from preference to build near us. It is a social little creature, often building within range of eye and hand, and almost cheating one into the fancy that his sole object is to sing for the amusement of his neighbors. He will begin a delightful strain close to a window, perched on a flowering shrub perchance, or swinging to and fro on a waving spray of some creeping vine, and sing half an hour away with little interruption. No one can hear one of his joyous bursts of song without being convinced that the wren sings with pure pleasure, out of the fullness of his happy little heart. The birds sing to us nothing but Truth. In this sense, their songs are pure as hymns. There is no leaven of evil in their music. And they clearly delight in their gift of song. It is said that, on some happy occasion, when Jenny Lind had been surpassing herself at a charity concert, she exclaimed, joyously, "Es ist doch schön dass ich so singen kann!" ("Is it not charming that I can sing so!"). And if we understood the language of the wren, we might perhaps discover the same feeling of happy wonder at his own performance. His summer life seems to be more than half song. He will sing in the warmest noontide hours, when other birds are silent. He will sing on cloudy days, when other birds are moping. But perhaps his choicest, most gleesome, most musical melody, is sung after a shower, from the head of some tall weed, and beneath the rainbow. He sings for the pleasure of his wife. He sings for the instruction and entertainment of his numerous little family. Sometimes one sees him flying toward his nest with a very eager, busy look, as if occupied with some affair of vast importance; in another moment he is out again, perched on the same twig where you have often seen him singing as if music were his only object in life. Nevertheless, he is anything but an idle creature, a regular busybody in fact, a great builder of nests, a very kind husband, and an excellent father to his comical little children, who cluster together full of fun and play, but rather helpless, and who are watched by their parents and fed by them long after they have left the nest. And, happily for us, through all his family cares he sings away merrily and sweetly beneath our windows, ever generous with his music.

As for the robins, every one knows that portly, honest, sensible-looking creature, the first bird to return to the village in the early spring-days, and

the last to leave us. They are often very tame. And no wonder: many of them were doubtless born on some window-sill, or under the eaves of your own house, perhaps. We once had a very friendly acquaintance with a robin family, which lasted during three years. The parent-birds, frightened from their first nest in a pine-tree on the bank of the Susquehanna by a cruel and rapacious hawk, who devoured their first brood under the very eyes of the poor father and mother, took refuge in very close neighborhood to us, beneath the roof of a veranda over the front-door of a cottage-home. There they seemed to feel perfectly safe, and took little heed of the coming and going of the family. They lingered very late that first year, the different members of their family flitting about the house, frequently on the roof of the veranda, or on the window-sills. The following spring, to our great pleasure, they returned, and, no little to our surprise, repaired the old nest over the front-door, and raised another family in it. They seemed to become even more tame, were not disturbed by the painters at work on the veranda, and continued to hover about the house more or less during the whole summer. The autumn was mild, and they lingered very late. At last there were light falls of snow, and the nights grew cold. At this moment a young robin, full-grown, but one of the summer brood, was observed to be often perching on a lower limb of a tree shading the veranda in summer-time, but now bare, of course. He would sit there by the hour, with his head turned toward the house. Early in the morning, on first opening the blinds, there was robin on his favorite limb. Late in the November twilight, there sat our robin, generally looking into our windows, as it were. Food was thrown on the roof of the veranda, but he ate little of it. All through November, until the last leaves had fallen, we saw our little friend more or less frequently. At length, he seemed to be the only robin left about the place, but there he was, looking toward the house when we opened the blinds at daylight. There he was still seen after the first snow-storm, when the gray limb where he perched was covered with snow. We watched him now with affectionate anxiety, and wonder at his perseverance; the last red berries of the mountain-ash had been eaten, the red haws of the thorn had all been harvested, and yet he sat there for an hour or two every day. It was not until the 11th of December that we missed him, after a cold, stormy night.

The next spring, the third season, there was a nest under the veranda, but not over the door; we fancied they were young birds, perchance our young friend of last December, though of this we could not of course be sure.

The cat-birds—what a wretched name, by-the-by, for a fine singer!—though not so numerous as the robins, often build in our villages, and are sociable and friendly. Those you meet in the woods are shy, and flit away among the flickering shadows as you draw near. Not so those whose parent-nest was placed in some garden-shrub. In the village which is the writer's home, there was some years since a luxuriant, old-fashioned flower-garden belonging to a venerable couple who took pleasure in working themselves, among the flowers, even in their old age, and both lived beyond fourscore. This garden became a favorite haunt of the cat-birds and the humming-birds for many years. Whether the flowers were an attraction we cannot say—the gay coloring may have pleased them, but probably the number of insects, their lawful game, was the inducement to build year after year on the same ground. In this garden was a pleasant arbor of primitive style, and near the arbor stood a fine crab-apple-tree. Here the old gentleman and the old lady would frequently rest awhile after working among their flowers. There had always been cat-birds about the place—that is to say *always* in the American sense of the word—some fifty years, perhaps, or since the ground had been first broken for a garden. But when the garden became well shaded, and the crab-apple had grown to be a tree, a pair of these birds built yearly among the apple-boughs, or in close neighborhood to the arbor. And here they sang their choicest songs with high glee. The old gentleman worked daily through the summer near the arbor, and the cat-birds became very intimate with him. They would fly about his head, perch on a twig in full sight, and hop down to pick up a worm close to his spade or hoe. They seemed, indeed, to take actual pleasure in his society. When they saw him coming with hoe or rake to his usual task, they would flutter out to meet him, and wish him good-morning in one of their odd cries, but end by singing him a sweet song. And this intimate friendship between the old gentleman and the cat-birds continued not only through one season, from May to October, but during several successive summers—five or six years indeed. The writer has often seen and heard them. They would tolerate other visitors to the arbor in company with their old friends, but if you went alone you were treated very shabbily—they became saucy, and, peering curiously at you from a safe distance, would begin to make fun of you with one of their mocking cries.

Then, twenty years ago, robins, wrens, cat-birds, and humming-birds, and, indeed, the whole summer flock, were certainly more numerous than they are to-day. Some observers believe that the number of summer birds has diminished more than half. The same species are still with us, but how long will they remain, when every year we note, perhaps, half a dozen on the same lawns where they were formerly counted by the score? *Now* you may sit on a garden-bench a long summer morning, and very possibly not see more than one oriole, one bluebird, one greenlet, one yellow-bird. Even the robins come hopping about the garden-walks by two and three, instead of the dozen who were formerly in sight at the same moment. And the humming-birds are very perceptibly less in numbers. One has to watch for them now in the summer twilight; presently you shall see little ruby-throat hovering alone about the honeysuckles; and perhaps, half an hour later, his wife, little green-breast, may come for a sip of

sweets. But that is all. Rarely, indeed, do you see four or five quivering, darting, flashing about among the blossoms at the same moment, as one often saw them in past years.

The gregarious birds, too—the purple finches, the wax-wings, the red-wings—are only seen in small parties compared to the flocks that visited us twenty years ago.

And winter tells the same story. Not that the regular winter birds are so much less numerous than they were—probably there is little change among the sober snow-birds, the merry chickadees, or the winter-sparrows. These will probably gather about our doors in January in much the same groups and small flocks that we saw here formerly. The woodpeckers and the blue-jays are less numerous, however. The crows seem to hold their own, and in mild weather come flapping out of their favorite haunts in the woods, to take a look at the village. But winter offers a mode of guessing at the number of the summer population, which is a pretty fair test, so far as the tree-builders are concerned. When the leaves fall in November, the nests are revealed, and after snow has fallen, and each nest takes a tiny white dome, they become still more conspicuous. The Indian tribes count their people by so many lodges or *tepées;* in the same way, during the autumn and winter months, we may count the tree-building flock of the previous summer by their nests. And these tree-builders are probably a fair proportion of the whole summer flock, including those who build among the bushes or on the ground. It has often been a winter amusement of the writer, when walking through the village-streets, to count the birds'-nests in the different trees in sight. The trees are all familiar friends, and the nests of different kinds add no little to their interest. But, alas! every four or five winters one observes the number of nests diminishing. Among the maples and elms lining the streets, or standing on corners, or rooted on garden-lawns but overhanging the side-walks, were certain individual trees which were apparently especial favorites; their gray limbs never failed to show year after year several of these white-domed nests. Here among the forked twigs of a young maple was the bold, rather coarsely-built nest of the robin, shreds of cloth or paper, picked up in the door-yards, hanging perhaps loosely from among the twigs. Yonder, on the drooping branch of an elm, near the churchyard-gate, was seen the long, closely-woven, pensile nest of the brilliant oriole. Here, again, not far from the town-pump—a primitive monument of civilization dating from the dark ages of village history, but still highly valued and much frequented by the present generation, although the little town now boasts its "Croton"—a maple of good size was never without a nest in spite of the movement and noise about the pump. There were several of these trees which showed every year two or three nests; and one, a maple differing in no way from other maples so far as one could see, and standing near a corner before the door of a parsonage, the branches almost grazing the modest windows of the house, revealed every winter three, four, or even five, and one year six, nests on different branches, from the lowest to the highest. There were often two robins' nests, with the pendulous nest of the greenlet, and one of the goldfinch, and occasionally one of a summer yellow-bird, or of a small pewee. The tree is still standing, gay with brilliant coloring, gold and red in varied shades, at the moment we are writing; but, so far as one can see, there has been but one nest on its branches during this last summer. Such was the story told by the village-trees *then;* you were never out of sight of some one nest, and frequently half a dozen could be counted in near neighborhood. To-day it may be doubted if we have more than one-third of the number of these street-nests which could be counted twenty years ago.

This is a sad change. These are the facts which would seem to account for the diminished number of the summer flock. Young boys, scarcely old enough, one would think, to carry a gun, are allowed to shoot the birds with impunity in the spring, when they are preparing to build, or even when their eggs are actually in the nest. This should not be. The law against shooting certain birds at that season should be enforced. It is now a dead letter. Then, again, look at your daughter's hat. Dead birds cannot build nests; they cannot sing for our joy and their own delight; they are mute, but, unhappily, they are considered a pretty ornament when pinned down among ribbons, flowers, fruits, beads, and bugles, on that composite exaggeration to which Fashion, forsooth, has given the name, but not the uses, of a hat. All the smaller birds, with any beauty of plumage, are now murdered to satisfy this whim of Fashion. When we remember the millions of women, young girls, and children, in the country, and bear in mind that most American women require three or four hats in a year—some of them a score or two—we can imagine how many yellow-birds, ruby-throats, greenlets, etc., are required to pile up the holocaust. One sees sometimes even girls who are half-babies wearing a humming-bird in their tiny hats. Not long since the writer saw a pretty young girl wearing impaled on one side of her hat a Mexican humming-bird, on the other a fiery-crest kinglet, while the wing of a blue-jay stood boldly up behind. One frequently sees parts of two or three different birds on the same hat—wings, or tails, or heads. Alas! why will our young maidens, pretty, and good, and kind-hearted in other matters, be so cruel to the birds? They would scold their little brothers for stealing nests or eggs, but they have no scruple whatever in wearing a dead bird in their hats!

A third cause of the lessened number of some species of our summer birds may be found in the fact that so many are now eaten at the South, by the caravan of travelers, when they are plump and in good condition from feeding on the many seeds and berries which form their usual winter harvest. "Small birds" are included in the bill-of-fare of every hotel in the warmer parts of the country from

November to March. This is perfectly natural, and one has not a word to say against the dainty dish of "four-and-twenty rice-birds baked in a pie" to set before the invalid traveler. But the great number of this class of travelers now moving southward every winter has no doubt been one cause of diminishing the flock of our summer birds. Travelers who in January breakfast on robins and rice-birds in Florida cannot expect to hear them sing the next spring in their home-meadows.

But, whatever be the cause of this marked difference of numbers between the summer flocks *then* and *now*, that difference becomes a grief to us. We miss our bird-companions sadly; we miss them from their haunts about our village-homes; the ear pines for their music, the eye longs for the sight of their beautiful forms flitting gayly to and fro. Still more serious, however, is the practical consequence of this wholesale slaughter of the smaller birds. The increase of insects is a tremendous evil, but it is the inevitable result of destroying the birds.

Remember that the plague of grasshoppers, so fearful at the West, is attributed entirely by some persons to the reckless slaughter of the prairie-hens shot by tens of thousands by covetous speculators, who send them now to Europe.

OLD FOGIES.

THE term "Old Fogy" is, I believe, to be found in few dictionaries. Its origin is involved in some obscurity. Perhaps it may be derived from the Italian word *affogare*, to suffocate; implying the deadening and stifling effect of what I shall attempt to define as Old-fogyism; or else from the old word *fogge*—dry or dead grass. But the simpler derivation from Fog and Foggy seems more probably the right one. And the word might at first have been applied to people of cloudy intellect. Its origin, however, is far less important than its meaning.

The common idea attached to the word is that of an old-fashioned person; one whose opinions and ways are outgrown by modern ideas. But here we must discriminate. For it would be very hard that all old-fashioned people should be put into the same category. There is a great difference between a man who in his riper years holds to certain wise old opinions and customs, and the man who is outgrown by his times. One is a genuine conservative in the best sense; he conserves or preserves the old because it is good. The other preserves very little that is worth preserving, and that little has already been adopted by the age. The one may with good reason advocate his views, old-fashioned though they may be termed. The other only shows his lack of wisdom in judging the progressive present time by his small and stationary past. He who fails to see the progress made in the world, in morals, in public decency, in humanity, in laws, in right notions of liberty and justice, in science, art, literature, and so on, and would sit by the light of his little tallow-dip, with closed shutters, while the morning sun has long been up—he might be termed an old fogy. The politician who would perpetuate the old slave-codes in these free United States—free not in the metaphorical sense of our quondam Fourth-of-July orators, but, thank God, really free; the doctor of medicine who puts his faith in leeches and lancets, and powerful drugs; the doctor of divinity who would smother geology with texts from Genesis; the doctor of law or legislation who would prescribe the cruel processes for curing public disorders, suggested by the pillory, the gallows, the rack, or the stake; the astronomer who would blur his clear calculations of the celestial orbs with the puerile fancies of astrology; the schoolmaster who would drive learning like nails into the pupils' heads, or whale it into their backs with the rattan—are such specimens of old fogies any better than a housekeeper who should prefer her tinder-box to friction-matches, or a sportsman who prefers to use his old flint-lock gun, because such were the customs of their youth? I suppose there is no question that folks who hold to useless or superseded old fashions might be correctly labeled "O. F.," and laid by in their appropriate social pigeon-holes. But take care you don't confuse these specimens with the genuine conservatives. Old-fashioned is not necessarily old fogy. Old fashions *may* be the best; and, let the circle be wide enough, may come round again as new fashions. If an old fashion, after having apparently become dead and decently buried, comes to life again—I mean to *real* life, and not an apparent or galvanic life that doesn't last—but comes to life so as to live in the affections, and tastes, and judgments, of a people—then, I take it, it is a sign that there was something in it worth preserving. By old fashions I don't, of course, mean what is merely external to the man or the woman, like fashions of dress or customs of life, but internal, like ideas, beliefs, religions, philosophies. I suppose that no such fashions, when they once contained any principle that was sound and good, and beneficial to the race, ever wholly pass away. They work up to the surface again, modified, of course, by the changed relations, and by the advance we may have made. And so it is hardly fair to say we are old fogies because we prefer much that is old to much that is new. And if a smart young gentleman, possessed with some modern idea which happens to be current, sticks the label "O. F." upon an old gentleman who cherishes a vision of ideas and customs when *he* was young—I, for one, am inclined (*prima facie*) to put in a plea for the old gentleman. He has, at least, the advantage of long life and some experience. And with some reason he may turn to the young gentleman, and say: "My young friend, this thing has been tested and certified, not by me alone, and by

people of my age, but by generations before either you or I were born. And if you dispute it, the appeal is to reason and the world's common-sense, which must sooner or later set every thing and every name in its right place."

A conservative, then, is not the same as an old fogy. He may be narrow, but if he is sincere, and does his best to see the truth, don't class him with that set. There may be old fogies among the brand-new reformers. People who imagine themselves the very apostles of new thoughts and measures may be tainted with unbelief in what is wisest and best.

Nor does the term apply, necessarily, to prejudiced or one-sided people. This prejudice or one-sidedness may be simply the undue or morbid emphasis of some one predominating trait or idea; something owing more to temperament or social environment than to any lack of faith in human nature, or in the power of truth. You would not call Carlyle an old fogy because he follows out his favorite theory of hero-worship to extreme applications, and believes in the one-man power rather than in the many-headed democracy. You wouldn't apply it to Wordsworth because he favored capital punishment; nor to Tennyson and Kingsley because they applauded the acts of Governor Eyre in Jamaica; nor to our Channing because he failed to appreciate fully the writings of Carlyle and Emerson. No man who has faith in great ideas, and in the capacity of mankind to receive them and to act upon them, ought to be placed in this class.

Perhaps the essence of old-fogyism consists in unbelief—by which I mean here that worst sort of unbelief which has no faith in ideas, in principles, and in human nature.

The unbeliever in ideas must always be an O. F. He must always find himself left behind in the advancement of truth in the world. For it is ideas that make the world's light and sunshine. Ignorance, which is the lack of ideas, is simple darkness and chaos. Nobody disputes this, and yet ignorance is forever trying to set up its standard, pretending to be wisdom. And a great many of the O. F. family are wont to enlist under it, and fight its battles.

But unbelief in principles is, if anything, worse still. Principle—i. e., virtue, goodness, morals, religion, or however you choose to name this great power—is the very Deity himself made manifest in the race, and without this, in combination with wisdom and intelligence, all institutions would suffer annihilation.

Of all unbelievers, it seems to me the most hopeless are the unbelievers in human nature—by which I mean what is best and noblest in man. This is the infidelity that comes of the lower regions. It is a vapor from the pit—mephitic, stifling, unbreathable, intolerable—pure carbonic-acid gas. These Mephistophelians are forever looking down into craters and volcanic holes and asphaltic Dead Sea wastes and naphtha-wells. And if they ever look up, it is into a region of thick and dreary fog. Hence the name "Old Foggies."

There are almost innumerable divisions and subdivisions of old-fogyism—all traceable to this radical unbelief in ideas, in principles, and in the capacities of human nature. Let us look at a few of them.

There are, first, the theological and religious O. F.'s whose creed is that man is by nature hopelessly depraved — that we are like fair, ruddy fruit, with a worm at the core, and the innate germ of rottenness, which nothing but divine grace can save from utter corruption.

I am aware that I may be venturing here on very delicate ground — on very jealously-guarded precincts. And I would be far from wishing to shock any one's cherished theological views. But I may safely say that I think the most enlightened Christian teachers are in accord in giving up the pious old lady's dear old doctrine of total depravity, which she hoped "she might live up to some day." That there is *some* good in all men, is getting to be, I think, more and more an article of faith, which has at least as much common-sense and humanity to recommend it as that other desperate view of our human constitution. It is, therefore, only among those extremists of the old school that I should go to gather my specimens of the theological O. F. And, whether consciously swayed by any theology or not, they may be found in any history of the past. History bristles with them; their name is legion. All along the lines of recorded time the gloomy procession stretches—through eras of idolatry and of monotheism; times of Catholic domination and times of Protestant emancipation; periods of corruption and of reform; through long vistas of struggle between tyrants and the people; through political intrigues, through devastating wars, through parliamentary debates, through party strifes, through stagnating periods of peace, and through sudden and stormy revolutions. Where this unbelief has most prevailed, you may see that the worst forms of social and political degradation have prevailed. You may trace this dry rot in the general immorality of the times of Charles II.; in the long centuries of despotism that ended in the great bloody revolution of France; in the history of religious persecution and the assumptions of the Roman Catholic Church; in the conditions of all the countries of the world, where the people have been defrauded of their rights, and of that education through which alone they can attain to their entire manhood.

In our age our theories have at least improved. And we lay by such specimens of the old times upon our shelves, as physicians bottle up in spirits bits of morbid anatomy, or as scientists put by the bones of old saurian monsters. We are fast finding out that only by coming back to human nature at its best, can we find any sure ground to stand upon. We are discovering that human nature is the only insoluble residuum in our last analysis of creeds; that all faiths have sprung out of it; that, whether we ascribe religion to a divine or human origin, it is only the accordance of what we call truth with human interests, human wants, hopes, aspirations, that constitutes its worth to the human soul; that we know

a religion to be true, not merely because certain inspired or learned men said so; not because certain councils indorsed it; not because Popes or Luthers or Calvins or Swedenborgs sanctioned it; not because miracles were wrought or the sword enforced it—but simply because it accords with the heights and the magnanimities of the human soul.

But the State as well as the Church has been from time immemorial infested with old-fogyism. All political history is one compact, continuous record of its domination. As religious fogyism found its fit embodiment in the Heaven-sanctioned and irresponsible priest, so political fogyism had its incarnation in the irresponsible king. And, of course, where there is a king or an emperor, there must be a nobility, an aristocracy of birth. The dukes and earls are but lesser lights of monarchy. The essence of tyranny is unbelief in human nature—denial of the natural capacity of mankind to grow in intelligence and virtue, and the ability to govern themselves. Hence feudalism, vassalage, serfdom, slavery, and all the iron codes that crushed the poor, the ignorant, and the weak. Hence the infernal powers stealing the supernal robes of justice, and defrauding man of his birthright. Hence the denunciation of free thought and reform. Hence the dungeon, the rack, the stake, and all the iniquities and horrors of political joined with priestly despotism.

The history of every old country on the globe furnishes examples without end of these crowned and mitred criminals—all alike desperate and hopeless unbelievers in man.

But we need not go to foreign countries, or back into the past, for our illustrations. Our own country and times can supply us.

I call that politician an old fogy who believes more in his party than in the principles which should inspire his party—who believes, not that his party-platform should be as firm as Plymouth Rock, but that it may be built so that you can slip in or out plank after plank, as easily as you do it in your extension dining-tables, to suit the emergency, making it a platform of compromise when compromise means surrender of what is noble and right for what is deemed expedient for party ends.

I call that partisan an old fogy who would effect his ends by bribery and other unworthy means rather than by fair and open appeal to honor and truth. I call old fogies that ruler, that judge, and that legislator, who look upon government and its machinery as less safe in the hands of faithful servants, chosen for their qualifications for office, than in those of cunning wire-pullers and selfish devourers of the loaves and fishes.

I see the jagged rocks ahead on which our American ship of state may steer and strike. I see how lack of faith in ideas and principles, and in men of integrity, is suffering the good old morality of our fathers to become a thing to sneer at and trample in the dust; and how it is tolerating in public life a class of selfish schemers and gamblers who put their trust in the influence of money and official patronage before fair competition, honest work, and open dealing in the state. If the pen is mightier than the sword, the creed is getting to be that the purse is mightier than either. Common honesty, common-sense, common respect for the traditions of our glorious Revolution and our admirable Constitution, should brand forever such plotters against the principles we profess.

Then there are the old fogies of society—a very ancient order—the people who worship established custom and usage, and obey without questioning prescribed forms of thought and of life. The manners, customs, morals, fashions, of the time in which they live, are but moulds in which they are cast, and insist on others being cast in.

This category comprises often people of the most opposite political, social, and theological beliefs: as, for instance, in the time of Charles II., the Cavaliers and the Puritans; and the social forms represented by these two great conflicting extremes ran and hardened into corresponding extremes of social life. The stern and solemn Roundhead who protested against all free play of Nature, and denounced all amusement and hilarity, was an old fogy no less than the gay and licentious Cavalier who made his religion a sort of church-drill, and had no particular principle save loyalty to his unprincipled sovereign. And in our time and country we have the same varieties of this family—at war with each other, but all tacitly agreeing in unbelief in the great basis of humanity.

I see these people all about me—in the streets, in shops, in parlors, in churches, in political meetings. Sometimes I fancy I know them by certain outward signs—by the expression of their faces, by their voices, by their gait, and their dress.

Old fogies are not, of course, always old. Some of the most virulent sort are, alas! young men and young women, petrified at a very early stage of their existence into these peripatetic fossils. You can't always detect them at first sight or hearing, for they cover their hard emptiness with plausible manners. But the *old* O. F.'s are more easily recognizable. I used to fancy that I met occasionally a noteworthy member of the order in the streets of New York, and in the market where I bought my daily meat. I never knew his name or his number, but I strongly suspected him to belong to a branch of the O. F.'s whose united freemasonry extends over the globe. As I recall him now, he is an erect, smooth-shaven old gentleman, wearing his gray hair and whiskers brushed *forward*, the opposite direction to their natural turn. He looks in good preservation, and evidently lives well. He is as good as gold on 'Change and at the banks. He has a self-complacency which is superb. I have no doubt he stands as well with his conscience and in his church-piety as he does on Wall Street. He is so erect in his self-estimation, as well as in his vertebral column, that, as he stands there choosing the best tenderloin-steak to be had, he rises occasionally on the toes of his shining boots with a springy motion highly delightful to see in a gentleman of sixty. He monopolizes the butcher's stand; is in no hurry to let others take their turn; never looks around, ex-

cept to reply over his shoulder to some acquaintance's remark about the weather. He feels his oats, and rears and cavorts mentally. He is not a devotee to the fashions of Fifth Avenue. He can afford to scorn those. And he likes a good table so well that he will choose his own roasting-piece. He wears a tall, shiny hat and a tall shirt-collar. He carries a cane, silver-headed or gold-headed, with which he raps dictatorially on the piece of meat he wishes a cut from, and walks superbly out, like a very Dombey of the imperishable firm of Dombey & Son. Surely, I say, he carries O. F. on his garments as plainly as if written with indelible ink.

In fancy I can follow him to his brown-stone domicile, when business is over, and hear his cut-and-dried remarks upon persons and things. He takes the most conservative paper. He attends the wealthiest church. He talks with the infallibility of a machine. His ideas go round and round in a daily treadmill. His brain is a wheel, and his heart a miller's hopper. He keeps himself high and dry above any inundation from undue emotion or thought. And, as for laughter, why should such irreproachable facial muscles ever be distorted in such an unnecessary lapse of dignity? He might have been an apologist for slavery ten years ago. He is an apologist now for many customs which were just the thing when he was young. When he was young! As I look at him, I wonder if he ever was young. His opinions were formed—oh, so long ago!—when his mind was in as fluid and receptive a state as consisted with his character. He holds them still. He has not changed. He believes in his church. He believes in Wall Street. He believes in stereotyped morality and social standing. He believes in the current and average commonplaces of the average society. Above all, he believes in himself.

What sympathies for youthful ardor, what consideration for youthful indiscretion, can we expect from such a fossil? Can we imagine him taking any but cold, sidelong glances over his daily paper at the sports and prattle of children? or looking with any toleration upon the frailties of the poor, misguided wretches who were born and bred in degradation and ignorance?

Did he ever read the stories of Dickens, or "Les Misérables" of Victor Hugo, or any of the modern gospels of humanity, whose light and warmth, radiating through this nineteenth century, are better than half the sermons from Christian pulpits? If he has, these benign showers have slipped over him like drops of water on the back of a duck. Yet he lives in the droppings of the sanctuary. Once a week, at least, he takes a Sunday-bath in his pew. But it would be hard to detect any wet spot—any sign of inward baptism.

Was there ever an ancient Scribe or Pharisee who more justly merited the name we have given him?

But we can bear with an *old* O. F. much better than with a young one—who is, I think, about the dreariest specimen of humanity one can meet with in a community calling itself educated and cultivated. Think of it—in this open-windowed century, all ablaze with the light of ideas and principles—a young man—perchance sometimes a young woman (though, let us hope, such specimens are rare)—who never had anything of the *soul* of youth in them—at best only a faint shimmer of a chilly spring morning soon hidden in hard, gray clouds; whose belief in mankind and in womankind and in children goes only as far as their clothes or their social position or name; who hardly believe even in love except as a sort of weak, ephemeral sentiment; whose souls kindle with no generous enthusiasm at noble and heroic deeds; who never feel a tear dim their eyes at any record of suffering, or, if they do, credit it to themselves with self-complacency, taking stock in a sentiment as if it were a solid conscientious deed, but bearing about as much proportioned value to the latter as depreciated bank-bills or Bland silver bear to gold; who are incapable of any aspiration beyond the round of fashion and custom, and accept their environment as the all-in-all of life. This I say is a dreary spectacle. Were young society made up of such, it would be little better than a great mill or factory. And, instead of life's inner music and songs, we should be bored to death with an endless reiteration of humdrum tunes ground from social hand-organs.

We all hope, I am sure, that such types are rare. In the older and aristocratic phases of society they must have been more frequent. If they are found in American life, they cannot accord with our institutions and habits of thought.

It is only as it is made up of persons who believe that the great central elements of human nature are working for good, and who endeavor to make their lives accord with an ideal standard, that society becomes possible in any large sense. The central Christian idea, which is that of universal human brotherhood, sums it all up in the kingdom of heaven, or ideal society on earth. And the same idea, only in far less power, has been the sap and essence of all society deserving the name society since men and women existed in communities. And in proportion as the opposite or devil's creed has prevailed—namely, that human nature is essentially corrupt and weak—society has become disorganized and lost natural cohesion; and the result has been anarchy, class-antagonism, and every hideous form that selfishness and aggressive brute force can assume.

But the modern nickname which has been the text of this essay applies rather to those who clog and impede the divine currents than to the active foes of society. The genuine O. F. is a negative rather than a positive force. He obstructs the free circulation of the fair humanities. He lies with a dead weight upon the healthy action and growth of the social body. He produces social indigestion and worry and blues and nightmare. He brings a chill into a company of warm, earnest, and hopeful souls. He acts like confined carbonic-acid gas in ill-ventilated rooms—is unprofitable, stale, mephitic, deadening; takes the elasticity out of you; is a non-conductor, an east wind, a drug. You may mistake him for a lump of sweet and soluble sugar in your cup,

and he turns out to be a lump of marble; or, if he melts at all in the wine or tea of life, it is only into dregs and questionable deposit at the bottom of the glass. In all generous and enthusiastic conversation he is a wet blanket. You can't kindle him short of petroleum or nitro-glycerine; but, if *you* should kindle with the flame of any unprecedented thought or feeling, he pulls out a patent formulated fire-extinguisher, and tries to put *you* out. We wrong the conservatives in classing him with them. Genuine conservatism conserves what is worth preserving; but all that *he* preserves is like mud and slime and refuse at the bottom of the stream.

Yet, after all, we should not, perhaps, consider old-fogyism too seriously. It may be more unreal and hollow than we think. Man's belief in man is, perhaps, more deep-seated and universal than it appears from looking upon the surface of things. Were it not so, society would not cohere as it does. Over our heads and under our feet throbs and courses a great current, more than electric, more than magnetic, uniting all men in marvelously subtile relations.

"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin;" or, as a friend of mine quaintly, though less elegantly, expresses it, "*Folks are very folksy.*" Were mankind governed altogether by the creeds they were born into, the world would have a sorry time of it. The only way the world has ever gone forward has been by breaking through or overtopping its creeds. And this occurs more frequently than we think. I don't refer to the brave come-outers and radicals, or to the clear-eyed philosophers whose views would embrace the All (such deserve a chapter by themselves); but to those unconscious evaders of their professed creeds—the genuine men and women of every day, whom these creeds do not confine so closely that they cannot sometimes go out, as it were, like double-lived somnambules, and meet their heretic neighbors as if no such prison-house existed as that from which they have gone out on an airing. And if your orthodox neighbor forgets your heresy or infidelity on six days of the week, and agrees with you in the daily relations of life better than he thinks he does, let us consider it a gain that only on one day in the week, and for a few hours, he remembers that he is bound to differ from you.

There is comfort, then, that this *credo* of despair is for the most part essentially hollow and superficial. It is extraordinary how even double-dyed conservatism will complacently quote Burns's

"A man's a man for a' that"—

an aphorism of true philosophic depth condensed into a flash of poetry gleaming out of the world's darkness, and bringing us face to face with all that is good and great in the masses of humanity.

The great antidotes to this unbelief in man are found in lofty commerce with the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, in philosophy, in poetry, in conscience, in fraternal relations with our kind. Sound thought, good sense, the fine ideal pictures painted in the air before us by imagination and hope, and, above all, a habit formed on trust in the real, underlying elements of character—these are the preserving forces that keep our feet from stumbling on the dark mountains, and plunging into pitfalls and craters; and it is these that keep open the blessed light of the heavens, so that belief in human nature shall be one with the enjoyment of the light and the air and with all that furnishes us with symbols of the Divine nature.

And let our youths and maidens fortify their minds with the study of the great and good characters of all time. History, read aright, is more a garden of flowers and fruits than a wild of weeds and briers. Not on man's helplessness, but on his strength and glory, must the faith of our day found itself. If man is a worm, he can at least spin his cocoon, and come out one day from the chrysalis a glorious winged creature. If the devil is at the core of things, we can harness even *him* to our triumphal cars, as Science yokes the telluric forces of steam and fire to our wagons, and bids the thunderbolts of Jove fly with our messages like carrier-doves. And all sin and evil shall be so much excessive and waste strength, destined in the providence of God to be utilized for the intellectual and spiritual triumph of the race.

THE SAME SONG.

WHERE was it I heard that song,
And why did it ring so sweet—
Its exquisite harmonies, bounding and strong,
Keeping time to my heart as it beat?

Why, indeed? For, as if in a dream,
I remember the blended strains
Ceased, one by one, and the wandering theme
Ran on into fainter refrains—

Till the music grew harsh and thin,
Like the voice of a dying bird,
And never again the beauty could win
That first in its notes I had heard.

Even now, as it drifts to my ear,
Drear echoings only emerge
Of wind, and snow, and the falling tear,
Or the plaint of the spent sea-surge.

Ah! is it the same old song?
Yes; some one says it began
With the days of my life, and will last as long,
To measure in music life's plan.

But the tones that wrought its old spell—
Youth, hope, and joy—took wing;
And the tune of my life sounds hardly so well
When played on a single string!

BY CELIA'S ARBOR.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A FAMILY GATHERING.

So all seemed settled, and there was nothing at all left for us but to rejoice and be glad together. All is well that ends well. Leonard and Celia were to be married; the captain and I were to go on together as of old; there was to be no more threatening of insurrections; life would resume the same calm which is so dull to look back upon, and yet so happy while it lasts. We celebrated the event of Celia's engagement immediately by a family gathering that evening at Mr. Tyrrell's. It was also an entertainment in commemoration of the reconciliation of Aunt Jane with her niece, and, if on that account alone, the best tea-things were produced, and there was a lavish expenditure in the matter of muffins and tea-cakes.

Nothing shows the march of civilization more than the decay in the consumption of muffins and tea-cakes. Nobody has tea at all now, except at five o'clock, because those who remember what a tea-party used to be cannot call handing tea round in trays having tea. Nobody sits down now to a table covered with cake in various forms; but it was in those days the commonest form of entertainment. I suppose everybody of the middle classes looked upon a tea-party as the chief instrument of social intercourse, and Mrs. Tyrrell was by no means singular in attaching a symbolic importance to her best tea-service.

Nothing could have been finer than the manner of Aunt Jane. She kept Celia beside her. She offered no objection whatever when her husband, presuming on the unusually fine weather, ventured to ask for more sugar. She made no allusion to any Christian privileges, either by way of example or admonition; and, having found out that Miss Rutherford's father had been a distinguished writer and preacher of the same school as herself—that is, of the severest Calvinistic type—she received her with marked cordiality. Calvinism in that gentle lady, however, was so tempered with native kindness that it lost all its terrors.

As for Mr. Tyrrell, the removal of the weight upon him almost restored him to his youth. He made jokes; he laughed; he was attentive to his wife; he was not only happy again, but he had recovered his old confidence and importance.

In the evening we played, Celia and I, then we sang duets, then Celia sang by herself, but only one song, because everybody wanted a little confidential talk with her in turn.

First it was Aunt Jane.

"Well, my dear," she said, with an inclination of the head in the direction of Leonard, "as you have made your choice, I suppose there is nothing more to say."

"But, dear aunt"—well-brought-up young people in those days did not venture on such a disrespectful endearment as "auntie"—I should like to have seen any one address Mrs. Pontifex as "auntie"—"you have no objection to Leonard, have you?"

"No, no," she replied, critically. "He is, I am told, though not yet a Professing Believer, not without hopes. A husband, my dear, is what a wife makes him. You would hardly believe, perhaps, the trouble which my husband, John Pontifex, has given me by the violence of his natural inclinations. All men, in the matter of eating and drinking, require strong and constant discipline. That you will have to administer, with constant searchings into your own conscience. Mere worldliness I need hardly warn you against. You must not encourage your husband's tendency to over-estimate the value of earthly distinctions, though I am glad to learn from his aunt that he comes of a County Family. We who have been blessed by Providence with County connections would be blind to our privileges did we not remember that fact. You will never forget your own maternal connections. I refer rather to military distinction. And, above all, my dear, guard against inordinate affection. I need hardly warn you that, before marriage, any demonstration of—of—of what I suppose you call love, is highly improper. No girl who values herself, or calls herself a Christian gentlewoman, would allow her lover to kiss her on the lips. My first husband, it is true, once surprised me by kissing what he called my marble brow. I never allowed John Pontifex more than the tip of my fingers. After marriage you will find they are not so anxious for kissing. Remember that, my dear.

"He is what the world calls handsome, I fear"—as if it were a blot upon his moral character—"and he has been successful so far." Here she sighed, as if that was another moral blot. "But he is young. I could have wished you to remain, as I did, single to the age of thirty, or even forty; you then might have chosen a man some years your junior, and enjoyed the privileges which age and maturity add to marriage. That has been the case with John Pontifex."

Then it was the captain.

"Come to me, Cis, my pretty," the old man called her to sit beside him. "Come and tell me all about it. And so you have accepted my boy Leonard, have you? Happy man! I believe I am jealous of him. You must not forget the old house by the mill-dam."

"No," said Cis. "I shall not forget the old house, or its owner."

"When is Leonard going to take you away? Don't let him hurry you, Celia. We shall be dull when you are gone."

They protested to each other like a pair of lovers, the old captain and the girl. I believe she loved the old man as well as any one, after Leonard.

She looked shyly happy, and was as radiant as a moss-rose half blown with the sunshine on it. Her eyes kept lifting to Leonard, as if she could not bear that he should be out of her sight for a moment, and they were full of a new, strange, and wonderful words of Leonard the magician. I have watched other maidens since then, and have seen that look in some of their eyes, but not in all. "She loves him, loves him not," I say, according to the light of her eyes.



"'And so you have accepted my boy Leonard, have you?'"—Page 536.

light. A change had fallen upon her all in a day. A man loved her, and she could give him love for love. It was no mushroom passion, the growth of a ballroom, brought into being by a pair of bright eyes, an intoxicating waltz, the whirl of white arms, and the glamour of music; it was a life-long affection, suddenly ripened into love by the touch and

"And not a word for me, Cis, for my own private ear?"

"What shall I say, Laddy?"

"Are you perfectly content and happy, my dear?"

"Yes, Laddy, quite, quite happy. There is nothing that Heaven can give me more. I am more

happy than I can say. And you? There is no more danger about this Polish business?"

"Happily, none. I am free. My poor old Wassielewski exaggerated the certainty of his insurrection. He saw what he wished to see. The Poles are not ready yet, and, so far as I am concerned, they would not have me if I wanted to go. Of that I am certain."

"I am glad. I could not bear to think of you breathing revenge and bloodshed. You will stay at home, and make the world happier with music, Laddy. You must be a great composer."

And then Mr. Pontifex claimed her.

"I have, I believe," he began, "to offer my—ahem!—my congratulations on so auspicious an event as your—in fact—your engagement. Marriage is an honorable condition, although not, as the papists ignorantly make it, one of the sacraments of the Church. We have known the young man, your—your—in fact, your betrothed—for many years, and we rejoice to find that he has not only distinguished himself as greatly in—ahem!—in action—as others"—meaning himself—"sometimes distinguish themselves at Oxford in examination, but he has also been enabled under Providence to recover what some would consider an indispensable condition of acceptance with a family of respectability—I mean respectable connections of his own."

Celia laughed.

"At all events, we liked Leonard before he had found Miss Rutherford."

"That is most true. You will, however, Celia, be rejoiced to learn that Miss Rutherford herself belongs to a county family, and that Leonard, both on his father's side and his mother's, is of an excellent stock."

"I am glad if Leonard is glad."

"Your aunt—in fact, Mrs. Pontifex—thinks that steps should be taken to put Leonard in communication with his father's family, a subject on which she proposes to speak at another occasion. For the present, Celia, my dear, she will probably do no more than invite you to dinner. Mrs. Pontifex has resolved—I may say—upon having a dinner. I do not myself, I confess, greatly admire our own, or rather her style—ahem!—of entertainment. I have, on one or two such occasions, arisen from the meal with an unsatisfied appetite. But we think too much on carnal things."

And all the time Leonard was talking with his newly-found aunt. It seems a prosaic ending for one who never had a father. Leonard was a foundling, or next door to it; he attained to three-and-twenty without knowing where he came from, and he then, having just occasion to thank Heaven that his father was no more, found—an aunt. No lordly lineage, no rich and childless father brooding over the irretrievable past, no accession to wealth and fortune, only a maiden aunt, with a small income, only a confirmation of the fact stated by the poor, dying mother that he was a gentleman by birth. Yet the confirmation pleased Leonard as much as if he had been proved an earl by birth, and was declared the missing heir to boundless acres and a genealogy going beyond Noah.

It was a quiet evening, with no general conversation, but always these subdivisions and sections of two and three. It was not late when we separated, and Leonard, leaving Miss Rutherford to the care of Cis, came with the captain and myself.

The captain had his pipe and glass of grog, and went up-stairs to turn in. We, left alone, sat silent, looking into space, at the open window, wrapped in our thoughts.

Surely, I considered, Leonard is the spoiled child, whom nothing can spoil, of Fortune. He has fought his way through the briers and brambles of poverty and obscurity, the friendly hand of Fate warding off bullets, bayonets, and the breath of disease. He has come back to us, bearing the queen's commission, a successful hero, where so many equally heroic, only less successful, had fallen by the way, and now lie dead on the plains of India, or in the cemeteries of Scutari and the Crimea—he had the gift of good luck—*la main heureuse*. Whatever he tries to do, he does well. To be sure, he does it with all his might. What we call luck, a small and degraded word, the ancients called fate, because to them success and failure meant much more than they mean now. To lose your high estate; to be a slave who once was Queen of Troy with gallant sons foremost in the fight—that was fate. To return in triumph, leading the captive kings at the chariot-wheel—or to be one of the captive kings, shorn of all your former magnificence—Louis Quatorze with the wig off—that was fate. To sit in obscurity, to go on living upon a small income, to be unknown, when you know yourself as good a man as he whose name is in every paper, whose voice is heard at every gateway, whom the lord-mayor delighteth to honor—that is luck. It seems at first to be a thing quite independent of personal virtues, except that you ought not to be conspicuously vicious. Luck was with Leonard. And yet he was conspicuously, like all successful men, one who deserved his luck.

"What are you thinking of, Laddy?"

"I am thinking that, of all men on earth, you are at this moment the happiest."

"I think I am, indeed," he said, softly. "I have Celia; I have my commission and my medals; and now I am no longer a waif and stray in the world, come from nobody knows where, but I have my place with the rest, and can talk of my forefathers like any Howard."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE POLE'S VENGEANCE.

It was past eleven o'clock, but the day had been exciting, and we could not think of sleep. It was a hot night, too, with little wind, but a full, bright moon shining in the placid waters of the mill-dam. The town was very quiet: in the kitchen, a cricket chirped loudly; in a neighboring garden was bay-

ing a foolish dog, driven nervous by the moonlight, which, as everybody knows, makes wandering spectres, if there are any about, visible to dogs. Frightened at length by the sound of his own voice—perhaps awed by a more than commonly dreadful ghost—he left off barking, and retreated to his kennel. Then we were quite quiet, and sat face to face in silence.

My nerves that night were strung to the point at which whatever happens brings relief. I felt as if something was going to happen.

So did Leonard.

"Come," he said, "we must either talk or go off to bed. I feel as if something oppressive was in the air. Is it thunder? No; it is a clear and beautiful night. Let us go into the garden."

We went to the end of the garden, and stood on the stone coping, looking over the broad sheet of water.

"You are content, Laddy, with the turn things took this afternoon?"

"Yes," I said, "content, and yet humiliated. Why did I ever learn the story of my people?"

"Poland has no claim upon you," said Leonard. "Your education — your disposition — everything makes you a man of peace. Stay at home, and make the name of Pulaski glorious in art."

"Who is that, Leonard? Listen!"

An uneven step in the quiet street. That was nothing, but the step seemed familiar. And it stopped at our door. And then there was rapping, a low rapping, as if the late caller wanted to come in confidentially.

There was a light burning in the hall, and Leonard, snatching it up, opened the door.

It was Wassielewski. And then I knew, without being told, that some dreadful thing had happened.

"Let me come in," he said. "I have a thing to say. Are you two alone?"

"Alone!" echoed Leonard. "Come in."

"The soldier," murmured the old Pole. "Good; he will understand."

As he stood in the light of the candles I was conscious of a curious change that had fallen upon him. His eyes had lost their wild and hungry brilliancy; they were soft and gentle; but his cheeks were flushed, and, though he held himself upright, his hands trembled.

"I am here to tell you, Ladislas Pulaski, that you are avenged upon the murderer of your mother."

"Wassielewski, you have killed him!"

I knew it without another word from him. The spy was dead, and the hand of my poor old friend was red with his blood.

"Yes, I have killed him," he said, gently.

"Tell us all," said Leonard.—"Courage, Laddy, courage.—And speak low."

"It was in fair fight," said Wassielewski. "I am no murderer. Do not think that I murdered him. We watched him, that good and true man from Paris and I, all day. We knew that he would escape by train if he could, and so we drew lots. One was to go to the station and watch there. He was to take a ticket for the same station as the spy; he was to telegraph for friends to meet him in London; he was to get out with him; he was to follow him; and he was to find out where he went. Because, you see, we meant that this man should do no more mischief to Poland. The other one was to watch the house, and follow the spy whenever he came out.

"The lot fell to me to watch the house. The other man went to the railway-station. But the spy will send no more intelligence to St. Petersburg. He lies dead in a meadow beneath the town-walls. I killed him there."

He spoke quite calmly, and as if he was merely stating a fact which we had every reason to expect. There was, however, no trace of bravado in his tone.

"I watched outside, from a window in a house opposite where they know me, from four o'clock till ten. Six hours! But I was not impatient, because I knew that the Lord had delivered him into my hands. After I thought things over, I perceived clearly that it was I, and not you, Ladislas, who was to avenge your mother. So I waited with patience, and, as one must guard against every accident, I even ate and drank.

"It is light now till nine, and there is light enough to see across the street till past ten. Soon after sunset I saw that he had lit a lamp, and was destroying papers. When he had gone through all the papers, he began to pack a trunk. I saw him put up his clothes; I saw him write an address on a card; and then—a quarter before ten was striking from St. John's Church—he took that long cloak of his, which you know, and put out the gas. There is a night-train at half-past ten. He was going to take it, and to send for his boxes afterward. So I went out after him.

"When he saw me, which he did at once, because he turned at the sound of footsteps, he stopped and waited for me. 'You propose murdering me,' he said. I told him that he was quite mistaken, and that, if he had used his opportunities of knowing the Poles better, he would understand that Poles never murder people at all, having contracted a horror of murder from the contemplation of such murders as those of Roman and Claudia Pulaski.

"'What do you want with me, then?' he asked.

"'I want to fight you,' I said. 'I intend to fight you.'

"He laughed at first, and asked me if I thought him such a fool as to fight with a mad Polish exile—he, a Russian official.

"Then I told him that he should not escape a duel; that, if he was to call the police, it would be no use, because others were waiting for him; that, if he escaped the town, the telegraph had sent messages to London, and he would meet with the Poles on arriving there; and if he tried to fly anywhere else, he would be watched, traced, and made to fight then.

"'Madman,' he said, 'what are we to fight with?'

"Then I showed him two long knives which

I had for years, never thinking what a use I should put them to. Knives like short swords, only without the hilt. And I told him he should have his choice. But fight he must.

"He hesitated, considering. He saw very well that what I offered him was his best chance. Man for man. If he killed me, he would probably get away somehow. My comrade was at the station, and might be eluded. Then he was younger and stronger than I.

"'You understand,' I said, 'the duel is to be *à outrance*. I shall kill you, unless you kill me first.'

"'Where are we to fight, madman?' he asked.

"I told him of a place I knew of, a meadow surrounded with trees, beneath the town-wall. He knew it too, and nodded.

"'You are younger,' I said. 'You have that advantage; on the other hand, you have a bad cause, and I a good one. You will fight your best, but you have to fight two, not one—Roman Pulaski as well as Wassielewski. One is dead, and it is hard to fight a dead man.' He laughed; he was no coward, that man. No, no; I never said that the Muscovites are cowards; but it is not well to laugh at dead men. The dead arm may still strike. He was no coward; he was brave, like all his countrymen. But he laughed at the dead; he said he was ready to fight a dozen dead Poles. 'But as for you, mad old patriot and fool, I will not fight you. Stand out of my path!' 'Do you wish to fight in the street?' I asked him. 'Here is your knife; here is mine. For fight you shall.' I suppose he saw that it was no use to refuse, for he took the knife and cursed me. He could curse very well, that man. I said nothing, because the Lord had delivered him into my hand, and it is not good to begin a fight with cursing. So I walked beside him, feeling the point of my knife—at his left hand, because the Muscovite spies are treacherous, and he might have tried to stab me had I been on the other side. One has to be careful with such men as that."

"I think, Wassielewski," said Leonard, "that you had better sit down and rest. This talk is too much for you."

The old man was swaying backward and forward, flinging about his arms, acting the scene, imitating his enemy's voice and gestures, so that one could picture the big, ponderous-looking spy staring straight in the Pole's face in his insolent, cynical, and contemptuous way. But his voice grew shaky, and his lips were parched.

Leonard poured out a glass of spirits-and-water, which he drank greedily.

"Aha!" he cried, "I forgot that I was thirsty. Now I can go on."

"Laddy," said Leonard, "don't stare at him with that scared face. Courage, dear boy. Wait till we come to the end. Keep your imagination quiet, now above all times.—If you are ready, Wassielewski, to go on—"

"Yes, I am ready. Oh! yes. Quite ready.

"It is a beautiful moonlight night. Almost like a moonlight night in Poland. I thought of the night-marches we used to have in 1833, singing as we went through the woods—those were the times for the Poles, when we met the enemy in the morning and cut him off before he was awake. And then I thought of the moonlight nights—ah, how many years ago!—fifty years and more, when Napoleon promised to free Poland, and all of us flocked to his army—and the merry days when we danced all night long with the Polish girls, long before the Muscovite forbade them to wear their own dress, and stopped their dancing altogether. The more I thought of these things, the more happy I felt to be walking side by side with the spy. Because I knew, oh! yes, I knew very well indeed, that I was going to kill him.

"And as I was back in Poland I thought of other things. It is a good thing that one can think so quickly. I was with the rebels again. I had in my hands the very gun which the Lady Claudia gave me. I was creeping in the underwood toward a Russian outpost; I was sentinel all night in the insurgents' camp; I was fighting behind a barricade; I was following Roman Pulaski in a charge; I was running after the carts in which the children were being carried away; I was crying over the dead body of Claudia with little Ladislas in my arms—I saw it all—all my past life, as well as I see you, Ladislas, and you, Leonard Copleston, before me at this minute. It was a sign to me that I was to gain some signal and great honor. And no honor could be so great to me as the killing of that spy. Because I knew very well indeed that I was certain to kill him.

"Then a strange thing happened. I saw that on the other side of the spy, marching silently, was your dead father, Roman Pulaski. His face was stern and hard, not like the happy face he wore when he married his wife, when he tossed his child, and when he set off to fight the Russians, but stern and hard. He meant that justice should be done. There was the memory of his long march to Siberia in his look, and the years of misery in the mine. He was worn and haggard, and his hair was gray, though his step was firm. Roman Pulaski was going to fight for me. It seemed unfair for the man between us, but it was justice.

"At my right was Lady Claudia She took no notice of the spy who was going to be killed, not the least notice, because he was beneath her contempt. But she whispered in my ears gracious words: 'Faithful Wassielewski, brave old servant, this one battle over and your work is done. Courage and patience. You shall see me again before long, when this man is killed.'

"We marched in silence, we four, with the steps of two, side by side, along the deserted streets. No one met us, the patrols were all gone back to their barracks, and no policeman passed us. It would have astonished a policeman to see four persons walking together, and two of them dead. When we got to the place where we were to fight—you know it well, Ladislas! it is where you and the young lady walk sometimes, and sit among the flowers—we got over the gate side by side, and walked across the grass."

Good Heavens! The man, then, was lying dead among the buttercups in our own meadow under Celia's Arbor, the place where we had talked, played, and sauntered so many, many times so many years.

"He said nothing, but kept his eyes on me—he did not seem to take any notice of Roman Pulaski—while he threw off his cloak and hat. It is a full moon, and the meadow was as light almost as day. He chose his own position, where the moonshine fell full upon my face, so that it might blind my eyes. Fool! As if it mattered while Roman Pulaski was by my side. I laughed at his madness, and took the place he left for me. The Lady Claudia remained behind. It was not for her to watch the fight. She stood beneath the trees, where I saw her white robes fluttering in the breeze. You cannot expect a saint in heaven to look at the punishment of a spy.

"Foot to foot, and in each right hand a knife. He fought well, he sprang upon me like a lion, he struck at me here, there, everywhere, but he struck in vain, because all his blows were warded off. He was a brave man, but he fought against the dead. And all the time he cursed and swore at me for a madman, a mad old Pole, a mad old lunatic, everything that was mad. But I never answered, watching his knife, and waiting my chance. And close beside me stood Roman Pulaski, tall and strong as in life, but his face was hard and stern.

"And then the chance came, and he fell. My knife was plunged to the handle in his heart. I had no scratch upon me, no hurt or wound of any kind. And when he fell I thought of Lady Claudia's words, 'Only this one battle left and your work is done.' I am past seventy years of age. I fear I shall kill no more spies.

"I looked at him as he lay on the grass. There was a pool of blood, the knife was in his heart, and he was quite dead. And then I came away.

"Before me strode Roman Pulaski, and presently he joined the Lady Claudia. She waved her hand to me, and they both went out of sight hand-in-hand.

"Then I thought I would come here and tell you, Ladislas, that your enemy is dead. He can do you no more harm and Poland no more harm. The czar has one spy the less."

He ended his story, which he told throughout with a quiet and suppressed vehemence, and with the exultation of one who has done a noble and a brilliant action. Much brooding and a solitary life had driven him mad. He could see no cause for regret or repentance, he had slain his enemy in fair fight, he was the instrument of Providential retribution, he obeyed the behests of his dead mistress, and he had no doubt whatever that the phantoms of his disordered brain were real visitants from the realms of the upper world.

Real visitants! They were real to me while I listened with trembling lips to his story. I felt the great horror which, as they tell, falls always upon those who see, or think that they see, the spirits of the dead. It was as if in the room with Wassielewski were those sacred shades whom I longed but dreaded to look upon. And, for the moment, the horror of the murder, the image of the dead man lying on his back in the long grass, were lost in the eagerness of that desire that they would show themselves to me as they showed themselves to their old servant, and speak to me as they spoke to him. They never came, they never spoke, no voice or whisper from the grave has come to me, nor will come. And yet I doubt not that some time I shall see them both in earthly beauty glorified and with earthly love transformed into heavenly love.

"That will be best. She said my work was done. In Poland I shall find a grave near hers. I know where she lies beside the road, because I buried her. I will seek out the spot and die there, too. My work is done."

Leonard listened gravely. He had not interrupted him, except to ask for the knife. Now he looked at me with a pitying despair on his face. He could do nothing. The poor old man would be tried for murder. And he was quite mad.

Meantime Wassielewski sat down and rested. The exaltation was dying out in his brain, and he looked wearied.

And as we asked each other in despairing looks, Leonard and I, what to do next, we were startled by a step outside.

"Good Heavens!" I cried. "Who is that?"

Wassielewski had left the door open. The steps came into the hall; then we heard the street-door close gently. And then our own door opened slowly, and a muffled voice, hoarse and thick, whispered through the opening—

"All friends here?"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND.

"ALL friends here?"

Leonard sprang to the door and threw it open. In the doorway stood—good Heavens! was it Herr Räumer himself, wrapped in his long cloak, a military cloak, which fell to his heels, and was thrown over his left shoulder?—a figure the same height as the spy, and having a black felt hat pulled forward over his face.

"The spy's cloak," said Wassielewski, quietly, and without the least symptom of alarm or discomposure. "And his hat. But I killed him."

The figure cautiously removed the hat.

That action disclosed a head covered with short, thick, and stubbly red hair, a face whose expression was one of cunning, impudence, and anxiety, all combined; such a face as you may meet on the tramp along country-roads, one that glances upward at you as you pass the owner supine in the shade, or that you may see sitting outside a village beer-shop, or where the more adventurous class of tramps, vagrants and gypsies, most resort. Not the thin hatchet-face with receding forehead and protruding lips which belongs to the lowest class of London habitual crimi-

nals, the face of a class whose children will be *crétins*, the face which is the result of many generations of neglect, over-crowding, and vice. This was the face of a strong and healthy man, and yet the face of a sturdy rogue. And, in removing the hat, the fellow looked round with assurance and nodded cheerfully to Wassielewski.

"His cloak," said Wassielewski, pointing to the garment, "and his hat. But it was I who killed him!"

"Right you are, guv'nor," responded our new visitor, cheerfully. "His cloak it is. Likewise his hat it is. And I see you a-killing of him. But don't you be frightened, mate. All friends here?"

He turned his impudent face to us, as if we were a pair of accomplices.

"About the putting of that chap," he jerked his finger over his shoulder, "out of the way—I don't want to say nothink disagreeable. There's lots as ought to be put out o' the way, only there's the scraggin' after it—an' I do hope, guv'nor, as you won't be scragged. Bless you, there's a many gets off, on'y the papers don't say nothink about it.—And don't you frighten yourselves, young gents both. I've got a word to say as'll please all parties; give me time to say it. Lord help you, I feel like a pal a'ready to this old guv'nor here—and do you think I'd split upon a pal? Gar!"—he made a gesture indicative of contempt for those who split on pals—"and if you could oblige me with a drop of somethink to drink an' a bite of supper, and p'r'aps a mouthful o' baccy, I could say that word in a more friendly way—Lord—let's all be friends!"

He sat down at the table, and, throwing off the cloak, disclosed the uniform of a convict.

"Things are getting mighty pleasant," said Leonard. "Pray, are there any more of you outside? Who is going to turn up next?"

"No one, noble cap'en. No one—I'm by myself, and I wish to remain as such. There ain't no more of us—and we don't want no more. As you see, a convict I am and a convict I've been for the best part of a twelvemonth, working in that blamed Dockyard of yours. Is that rum in the decanter?"—the captain's spirit-case, in fact, stood on the sideboard, with a ham placed there for his supper, and not removed. "Give me a drop, my noble captain; I haven't tasted rum for—not too much water—Lord! it's delicious!" he gasped, as he drank off half a tumbler full, which Leonard gave him. "Another glass? And is that ham? I've really got somethink important to tell—jest a morsel of that ham There's no ham to be got in quod. Ham—*and* rum—Moses! what a chance!"

We gave him the ham and a plate, and contained our impatience while he sat down and made a supper. He devoured hurriedly, and yet took a long time, because he devoured an immense quantity. Either Nature had gifted him with a profound appetite, or the diet of the hulks was meagre. In either case, I never saw a man put away such an enormous quantity of provisions at one time. He wolfed the meat as if he had never tasted meat before, and drank as much rum-and-water as Leonard would give him. It was like a horrible nightmare to see that man calmly devouring his food while we waited his completion, as if a homicide was a matter that could wait to be talked about till things of greater importance, such as supper, were first discussed. But his appearance served one cause. It helped to calm one's nerves after the first shock of Wassielewski's story. The old man sat silent and steady, looking at the stranger with a little curiosity. He finished at length, and then, taking one of the captain's pipes, without asking leave, filled it with tobacco, lit it, and began to smoke and to talk in an easy, companionable way.

"Yes," he said, complacently, "I'm a convict. One-and-twenty years I've got. And if I'm caught, it will be a life-sentence, I dessay—with a flogging. I've had nearly a year, and might have got out six months ago, but it was a pity not to let the chaplain have a chance. Pro-fesh burglar. Cracker of cribs. That's what I am. Bagger of swag. That is my calling—it hath bin." I think he persuaded himself that he was quoting from the poets, because he repeated the line. "That is my calling, it hath bin. I was lagged last summer for a little business in the country, and came down here with a few other gentlemen also in misfortune, to work out the one-and-twenty years.

"One-and-twenty years! What do they think of it, them beaks with the wigs? One-and-twenty years! It drops out as glib as—as this here rum-and-water. Home they goes to their port-wine and their sherry-wine, and off we goes to the skilly-and-water. One-and-twenty years! Why don't they take and hang a man at once? Well, see here, now, there ain't a crib, not one solitary crib, you can p'int to in this blessed world that I can't crack. And so I've cracked even that convict crib that they thought to make so precious tight. Cracked it, I did, like—like a egg; and here I am. First, aboard a hulk. That's poor work, because you've got to swim ashore when you do get out, and, when you are ashore, what's a man worth in wet clothes? Besides, I can't swim. If everybody knew what was comin' in the future, everybody 'ud learn to swim. As long as I was aboard that hulk I was sad. Seemed as if a fellow hadn't got a chance. When we come ashore, I began to pick up my spirits, looked all about, and I made up my little plan at wunst, and, after a month or two—picking up a nail here and a nail there, and havin' the use of my fingers, as one may say, and not being altogether a bloomin' idiot—why, here I am."

"Yes," said Leonard, "you certainly are here. But, as we don't care about the society of burglars and escaped convicts, perhaps you will go on to say what you have to say, and relieve us of your company."

"Quite right, my noble lord," replied the burglarious professor, cheerfully. "Quite right, and just what I should have expected of such an out-an'-out, tip-top swell as you. It ain't the society you're accustomed to, is it? And yet you can't, I should

say, as a general rule, be fond of entertainin' slaughterers and killerers, can you? Now, what I've got to say is just this here. I see the whole fight from the beginnin' to the end. Where was I? Curled up in the shade I was, behind a tree, wishing that there moon"—here he used a strong adjective, which, with other strong adjectives, I suppress, even though their absence detracts from the fidelity of the story and the splendor of the style—"would hide her face behind a cloud. Then a fellow might ha' had a chance. There *is* a 'ouse in this town which I knows of, where I'd a' bin taken in and kep secret and comfortable for a bit, perhaps—naterally I wanted to get to that 'ouse. A moonlight night and the month o' June, without a atom of real dark. Ah! give me a good December night, as black as your hat, and a sweet crib to crack in the country, with on'y a woman or two in the place. Dear me! Well, gents both, as I was a-lying there, wishin', as I said, I see a brace o' men get over the gate and make for the middle of the field."

"Three men," said Wassielewski, "and a lady. Two were spirits."

"Now, don't you interrupt, mate. I know nothink about no spirits. I ses to myself, 'What's hup?' I ses. 'Cause somethink was bound to be hup when two men gets into a field a-midnight and stand face to face in the moonlight. 'It can't be,' I ses, 'that they're looking after Stepney Bob'—that's me, gents both—'cos he ain't missed yet, and won't be missed before five o'clock in the morning. So I concluded to keep quiet and see. Next moment one of 'em chucks his hat and cloak—this hat and this cloak—on the grass, and then I see the two knives flash the moonlight, and the fight began. One was a tall, thin man with long, white hair—that was you, mate—and t'other was a tall, stout man with short, white hair. That's the dead 'un, him as owned this cloak and this hat.

"I *have* seen 'em fight at the Whitechapel Theayter—one, two, three, give and take, while the music plays—and I don't suppose there's a properer way of getting through a long evening than the gallery of that 'ouse when there's a good fightin' piece on. But such a fight as this here I never see before on no boards whatsumever. For one, he began to cuss and swear, and danced about flourishing his knife, making lunges like that"—the gentleman illustrated his narrative with a supper-knife—"and never managed to hit the t'other at all. Reg'lar wild he looked. Couldn't fight proper for rage. Lor'! put such a chap as that before Ben Caunt, and where'd he be in a pig's whisper? Never done no mischief with *his* knife. The t'other, this here old cove—there now, it was a real treat to see him. The moon was in his face so as I should have thought it blinded him; but he took no notice, only looked his man straight in the eyes—that's the trick that does it—never said ne'er a word, and kept on parryin' them lunges quiet and beautiful, like this"—more illustration with the knife.

"A matter of six minutes it might have lasted, that fight, or perhaps ten, because you don't count the time when you're lookin' at a fight. And then, all of a sudden like, I see this same old cove put out his fist with the knife in it, and the t'other falls back upon the grass. That was all—wasn't it, mate? He got up once on his arm, but he fell back again. And he was dead—wasn't he, mate?"

He stopped to take breath and another pull of the rum-and-water.

"Another dollop o' that cold ham on the sideboard, little guv'ner, would be very grateful—it would, indeed, after the patter. Thank ye kindly. Now I'm better."

He actually devoured another plateful of ham before he would go on again.

"Well, what I came for to say is this here: After the t'other 'un rolled over I see the old cock here walk up and down the meadow slow, as if he was thinkin' what to do next. 'Why don't he bolt?' I ses. 'Why don't he clear his pockets?'"

"I was walking to the gate with Roman Pulaski," explained Wassielewski.

"No—not a bit—never went near his pockets. He goes on walkin' up and walkin' down, mutterin' with his lips. Presently he makes for the palin's. I instantly begins to crawl through the grass. When he got over the rails and walked away I was free to look after the t'other. Quite dead he was, dead as a door-nail."

"The Lord delivered him into my hands," said Wassielewski.

"And then I saw what a blessed Providential Go it was for me," the convict went on. "First I picked up his cloak, this most beautiful cloak, which you see goes right down to my heels, and covers up the uniform lovely. Then I picked up this here hat, which is a tile as good as new, and fits me like as if it was made for my head, and not for his'n. A better tile I never swagged. Then I remembered that, if I had a little money, it wouldn't be a bad thing. So I searched his pockets. There was a purse, and there was a lot of letters and papers. I left the letters, and I opened the purse. Twelve golden sovereigns and some notes—for I won't deceive you, gents both. What d'ye think I did? I ses to myself, 'If they bring it in murder agin the old 'un, they sha'n't bring it in robbery too, cos robbery is one thing and murder's another. These two things ought never to be combined.' I ought to know, cos I've cracked cribs since I was big enough to walk, and might ha' murdered dozens of innocent and confiding women, asleep in their beds. But I never did. No, never. So I takes all the sovereigns in the purse, and in his waistcoat-pocket I leaves three or four shillin's, and I leaves all the rest, the flimsies, a lovely gold watch, a sweet chain, and a diamond ring. It went to my 'eart not to have 'em, but I thought of this jolly old game rooster, and I left 'em."

"Chivalry," said Leonard, "is always a pleasant thing to meet with, even— Go on, most excellent burglar."

"The knife was in him, and his own knife was in his hand. What do you think I done next? I takes the knife out of the wound, and sticks it in

his hand, stead of his own. And I've brought along his own, and here it is."

He laid the knife upon the table—it was a long-pointed knife, like a stiletto—of foreign shape and make. I did not ask Wassielewski if it was his, but gave it to Leonard.

"One more thing," this philanthropist went on—"one more thing I done. There were marks of feet, and the grass was trampled. So I dragged him away, and laid him under the trees at the side of the field. They'll never think of looking in the middle and finding marks of a fight. After all that, I shouldn't wonder—I r'ally shouldn't—if they brought it in a fellar D C. But my advice to you, a game old cock as deserves to get off and die in the sheets, a-laughing at 'em all, is this: Whatever the werdict, you up and leg it, and then bring in a *alibi*. You ain't the sort to get off in a hurry; you walked so precious slow down the street that I had time to do all that and catch you up before ever you got out o' sight. I dodged yer all the way here, and sneaked in after you. Cos, I ses, I'd like to let him sleep comfortable if I could, ses I."

After all, one could not but feel grateful to this enthusiastic lover of a fight, in spite of the horrible circumstances of the case, and the tragedy which had just taken place. Somehow its outlines looked less horrible told by this jail-bird than when Wassielewski related the story.

"And now I'll go," he said, getting up, and wrapping his cloak about him. "I can tramp it up to London, and hide all the day somewheres. No one won't suspect Stepney Bob beneath this milingtary cloak and this out-an-out tile. Once back in Whitechapel, I know a place or two where they won't nab me for a spell, I don't think, and p'r'aps I'll step it altogether. And then you'll, maybe, hear of me cracking cribs for the Americans. Good-night, gents both.—Good-night, matey. Don't ye be down on your luck. But take my advice and leg it."

"Stay," said Leonard. "It's a delicate thing, interfering with your arrangements, and one's actions might be misunderstood, but if I might advise—"

"Go on, guv'ner."

"I would suggest that if you are not missed you will not be suspected, and a first-class traveler to London by the mail-train of 1.30, disguised, as you say, in that excellent cloak, would have a better chance of reaching Whitechapel safely than a tramp."

Stepney Bob was struck with the suggestion.

"That's true," he said, thoughtfully. "The train 'ud be in by four, and I sha'n't be missed till five. And in case o' accidents, I suppose"—he looked hard at Wassielewski—"I suppose that there ain't no one here who'd be so generous and so werry thoughtful as to step half a mile out o' the town and take a pair o' shears, and nip the" (strong adjectived) "telegraph-wires? Now, that 'ud be a job worth braggin' about. Come, now, they'd make a song out o' that job, I'd bet a trifle, and you'd be sung up and down the streets; all Whitechapel should ring with it, and the Dials too, and Ratcliffe Highway. Think o' that, mate."

No one volunteered to cut the telegraph-wires, and, after a little more rum-and-water, Stepney Bob decided on going, and disappeared after a cautious inspection of the street.

"It would read sweetly in the paper, wouldn't it?" said Leonard—"how Captain Copleston and Ladislas Pulaski spent the night in assisting the escape of a convicted burglar, known in the profession as Stepney Bob—however—"

"And what will you do, Wassielewski?"

"I shall do nothing. My work is over. I shall start for Poland—to-morrow. Ladislas Pulaski, if you marry and have children, teach them always that they are Poles. I was wrong in trying to get you with us. I see now that I was wrong. You will never fight for Poland. Another life is yours. God bless it for you—for the dear memory of your mother."

He laid his hand upon my head, rested it there for a few moments, and then went away, walking slowly and heavily, as if wearied with the weight of his life's work.

"Bear up, Laddy," said Leonard. "Come—be a man. Poor old Wassielewski is not responsible for his actions. Go to bed, and to-morrow we will act."

"I feel somehow as if the blood of that man was on my head, Leonard. It is through me that he was detected."

"Some people would say that the finger of Fate was in it, Laddy—I say that it is a fitting end to a life of spying, watching, and informing. I wish all secret-service agents could be got rid of in a similar way. Meantime, we must wait for to-morrow—I must think what we had better do."

"I cannot go up-stairs, Leonard. I feel as if that dead body were lying in my room waiting for me. Do not leave me to-night."

I could not bear to be alone. My nerves were like chords tingling and vibrating. I was in the presence of death and the other world. My brain was reeling.

Leonard carried me up-stairs, I think, and laid me on the bed, when presently, while he sat beside me, as if I were a sick girl, I fell into a deep sleep and dreamed that Wassielewski and I were trudging together along a road which I knew to be in Poland; and that before us stood our home—a stately mansion—and on the steps were Roman and Claudia Pulaski, holding out arms of welcome. And as I looked, Wassielewski suddenly left me, and I was alone. But he had joined the other two, and now all three were standing together waiting for me. Whenever, now, I dream of the past or of that fatal day, it is to see those three waiting still for me to join them.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A CORONER'S INQUEST.

IT is a shame for a man to have to confess his own weakness; but the truth has to be told. I broke

down at this point, and lay on the bed to which Leonard carried me for three weeks, in delirium. I suppose the great horror and shock of the evening following on the nervous agitation of the preceding three days was more than my brain could bear. At any rate, I had a bad time for the next fortnight or so, during which things went on without my being interested in them. Could one remember what delirium means, a chapter might be written—but one would need to be De Quincey to write it. First the chest seems to expand, and then the head to swell out and become of gigantic size. Then you lay your hands upon the forehead to make sure that it has not been carried somewhere else. Then you grow big all over, hands and feet and limbs. Then you lose all sense of weight, and seem to be flying in the air. And then, just as you are beginning to feel uncomfortable, your mind runs away from your control: things grotesque, things splendid, things absurd, things of the past, things from books, wild imaginations, crowd the brain, and move before the eyes like a real pageant of living creatures. Nothing astonishes, nothing seems strange; there is no sense of incongruity, and when you recover all is forgotten but the general impression of grotesque unreality. They told me afterward what had happened.

They discovered, early in the morning, two things: first, that a convict had escaped; and secondly, that a dead man was lying in the meadow beneath the walls.

At first they connected the two things, but subsequent inquiry led them to believe that the convict had nothing to do with the homicide.

As soon as Leonard could leave me with the captain he sought the old Pole. Wassielewski's single room was on the second floor in one of the crowded streets near Victory Row. The sailors' wives were all gathered about their doors, though the rain was falling heavily, talking of the discovery of the dead body, and wondering whether it was a murder or only a suicide. Most of them knew Leonard as an old inhabitant of the *quartier*, and saluted him kindly as Gentleman Jack—a name which they learned from their husbands' friends, the soldiers.

Leonard asked if the old man had been seen that morning. He had not, it was too early in the morning. It was his custom to remain in his room until noon, unless he was engaged to play for a paid-off crew. At twelve he descended, and would seldom return home till the evening. Leonard would find him in his room.

He mounted the stairs, and knocked. There was no answer. He knocked again. Again there was no answer. Could he have gone off already, on his way to Poland, acting on the burglar's advice?

Leonard went down the stairs again, and asked the mistress of the house. No, he had not gone out. He came home late, she said, perhaps as late as twelve, because she must have been in bed some time, and his footsteps woke her; but she had been up since six, and he certainly had not come downstairs.

She came up with Leonard this time, and they both knocked.

Then they called him by his name.

All was still and silent.

Leonard leaned his shoulder against the door and pushed. The bolt came away from the rotten wood, and the door fell open.

Wassielewski was kneeling by the bedside. In his hands was the miniature of my mother, and his lips were pressed closely to it. But the lips were as hard and as cold as the hands that held the cross, for the poor old man was dead.

He was not undressed. He died in his devotions, perhaps immediately after he came home. Red-handed with the blood of the spy, he went unrepentant to the after-world. The two souls, side by side, departed almost together.

This event, as Leonard said, simplified matters amazingly. It was no longer necessary for him to consider how the old man ought to give himself up to justice. It seemed pretty clear that the convict would hold his tongue even if he got caught, while if he got away he would certainly tell nothing. On the other hand, if he did tell it would be time enough to reveal the real truth. There was excuse, at any rate, in the plea that, the old Pole being dead, nothing could be gained by letting the world know that, like Lamech, he had slain a man.

The inquest on Wassielewski was very short. He had been found dead, he was an aged man, the doctor certified that the cause of death was disease of the heart, the verdict was given in accordance with the evidence, and the poor old man was buried with the rites of his own church.

By common consent of the few Poles who remained in the town, Leonard took possession for me of the few effects which the old man left. There were two or three weapons, relics of the last struggle, and his violin. We looked through the drawers and cupboard, but there were only a few papers containing lists of names and plans of campaigns. These were burnt to prevent accidents. Also there was a bag full of sovereigns—seventy or eighty—which he had put together in readiness for a start at a moment's notice. With the captain's consent and by his advice I subsequently distributed the legacy among his fellow-countrymen, who all came to the funeral of the most determined patriot that ever Poland produced.

A more important inquest was that held on the same day upon the body of Herr Räumer.

Ferdinand Brambler was, of course, present taking notes with the air of one who has got hold of a good thing and means to make the most of it. Also he was himself conscious of an accession of importance, for was not the deceased a lodger in his brother Augustus's house?

They first called the policeman who had found the body.

He deposed that early in the morning, at half-past four, he took the walk under the walls in the course of his beat; that he saw lying on the grass, just within the meadow, the body of a man. The

man was dressed, but without a hat. Money was in his pocket—somehow the statement of Stepney Bob and that of the policeman did not exactly tally, and either the burglar helped himself to more than he confessed, or the policeman took advantage of the situation and took two notes, at least, on his own account—that the deceased had upon him also a watch and chain and a diamond ring, those, namely, that lay on the table.

A suspicious juror—there is, always, I believe, a suspicious juror—here requested to see the watch and chain, which he inspected minutely. The deceased lay, the policeman went on, as if he had fallen backward after the blow was inflicted, and never moved again. The knife, which was that lying on the table, was of foreign make, such as a German gentleman might have carried. Being asked if he thought it was a murder, he said that there were no marks of violence or trampling in the grass; that, as he had not been robbed, he did not see why it should have been a murder. That from the knife being held tight in the right hand he thought it was suicide.

Then the doctor was called, the same doctor who gave evidence in the case of Wassielewski. He stated that death had been caused by a deep wound which punctured right through the heart, that the death must have been instantaneous; that, although such a wound would require the greatest determination, it was quite possible for a man to inflict it upon himself; that the right hand tightly held a knife covered with blood, and that the wound, in his opinion, was undoubtedly inflicted by that knife, the one before the jury.

The next witness was Mr. George Tyrrell, the mayor of the borough. He deposed that Herr Carl Räumer and himself were on friendly and intimate terms; that he had the management of his affairs; that he knew nothing whatever of his family connections in Germany; that a short time previously the Herr had instructed him to realize certain investments, which had been done as he requested; that he had last seen the deceased on the morning of his death, when nothing whatever passed which could warrant a belief that he was about to commit suicide; that, on the contrary, he stated that he was about to go away to the Continent, there to take up his permanent residence. But, on the other hand, he had received a note in the evening which struck him as singular. This note he would read. It was short, and was as follows:

"DEAR TYRRELL: I find that my departure will take place earlier than I intended. I wished to see you again. I shall, however, go this night and forever. My affairs are all settled. I wish, as you will never see me again, that you will take care of Ladislas Pulaski. Do not let the boy be persuaded ever to go to Poland. That is my solemn advice to him. Yours, C. R."

He said that, on receipt of the letter, he thought at first of going round, but as the hour was late he refrained, to his present great regret. The letter was brought by a child, daughter of his clerk, Augustus Brambler, in whose house Herr Räumer lodged.

The coroner asked if any of the jury wished to put any questions to his worship the mayor. The suspicious juror wished to ask the mayor if he was quite certain about the handwriting. The mayor had no doubt whatever of the letter being in his old friend's writing.

Then Charlotte Brambler was called. The report in the paper of the following Saturday, with which, of course, Ferdinand Brambler had nothing to do, spoke of her as a most intelligent, straightforward witness, who gave her evidence clearly and to the point. "Her face," the report went on, "is singularly attractive, and her appearance and demeanor elicited universal respect and admiration. She is, we understand, the eldest, not the second daughter, as reported, of Mr. Augustus Brambler, long and honorably connected with the Legal interests of the borough."

Little Forty-four did give her evidence very well. She had to say that she attended to Herr Räumer, and that at nine o'clock in the evening he called her up, and sent her with a letter to Mr. Tyrrell. There was no answer, and she returned immediately after delivering the note. Then he rang the bell again, and told her that he was going away that night—going on a long journey.

An intelligent juror here interposed. He said that a long journey might mean anything, and he asked the witness why she did not ask him how long it was?

Forty-four replied that she never asked Herr Räumer anything, but answered his questions, and as he did not say where he was going it was not for her to inquire. She went on to depose that he added that he should not return any more; that, instead of a month's notice, he paid down a month's rent; that, as she had attended him for some years, he gave her a five-pound note, which he advised her to keep for herself, and not waste it in buying things for her brothers and sisters—this was a touch entirely Räumeresque. Then he looked about the room, and said that the furniture could go to Mrs. Brambler, and she might have his old piano if she liked. Then she asked him what they were to do with the books, which are in French, with yellow-paper covers—in fact, French novels. He laughed, and said that if she pleased she might keep them till her brothers grew up, and then give them the books, which would certainly teach them a good deal about life previously unsuspected by them; but that, if she preferred, she might sell them for what they would fetch as waste-paper. At all events, he would never want any of the books or any of the things any more. The coroner here interposed, and asked her if she was quite sure that those were the very words the lodger used.

The witness was perfectly certain that those were his exact words.

"He would never want the books or any of the things any more."

The jury whispered together.

Then the coroner asked the girl about the knife.

She knew nothing about the knife; she had never seen such a knife in his room; but could not swear that he had no such knife, because he kept everything locked up. Perhaps the knife had been lying among Herr Räumer's things in one of the drawers. Had never tried to look into the drawers, would not be so mean as to pry into things.

Here the suspicious juror remarked plaintively that he should like to see the five-pound note which the deceased had given her. She produced the note, which was handed round among the jury, who examined it as carefully as if it had been an important *pièce de conviction*. Then they all shook their heads at one another, and gave it back to the coroner, who restored it to Forty-four.

There being no other evidence to call, the coroner proceeded to sum up:

The jury must consider, he said, all the circumstances. The deceased informed an old friend in the morning that he intended to go away shortly; in the evening he sent a very extraordinary epistle, stating that he was going away "forever"—the jury would make a note of that expression. At the same time he tells the little girl who was accustomed to attend upon him—and he was constrained to express his admiration at the very straightforward way in which that little girl's evidence was given—that he was going away, and was not coming back again. Let the jury mark, at this point, the suddenness of resolution. He took nothing with him; he abandoned the piano, his books, everything; and even made the very important remark that he should not want any of them any more. Why not? If a man goes on the Continent he does not give up reading; if a man changes his residence he does not throw away, so to speak, all his furniture, but carries it with him or sells it; but Herr Räumer was not, as he told the girl Charlotte Brambler, going on the Continent, but he was going, let the jury mark this very earnestly, he was going—on a long journey. Very good; but consider another point. The doctor was of opinion that the blow, if that of a suicide, must have required great determination. Possibly, perhaps, Herr Räumer had not the requisite amount of resolution; but the jury all remembered him—a stout, stern, and determined-looking person. As to courage, no man could tell when any other man's courage came to an end. And there were the facts that the knife was found in his hand, covered with blood; that there was no sign of any struggle on the ground, and that the knife was of foreign manufacture. If it was not suicide, what was it? Could the jury believe that a man of singularly quiet, regular, and reserved habits, should go out in the dead of the night, after making those remarkable statements and writing that remarkable letter, for a stroll, without his hat, on the walls? That he should then, still with the intention of taking a purposeless stroll, have climbed over the wooden railings into the field, and then presented his breast, offering no resistance, to the murderer? Then it was whispered that a convict, escaped that morning from the prison close by, might have done the deed. First of all, he must say that it appeared to him disgraceful that any convict should escape, but it was absurd to connect the convict with the death of a man he could not have known, and whom he did not rob. Also, how did that convict get hold of a foreign knife? Let the police catch and produce the fugitive, and it would then be time to consider the absurd suggestion. There, in fact, was the evidence all before the jury. They were a body of educated and intelligent men; they had sat at coroners' inquests before; and he, the coroner, was glad to say that a more trustworthy body of men to weigh evidence impartially he did not hope or desire to find. He therefore dismissed them in the confident hope that they would shortly return with a verdict.

In five minutes the jury came back. Their finding was unanimous. It was that the deceased committed suicide while suffering from temporary insanity.

This verdict, never disputed, was the end of the whole business. The deceased was buried at the expense of the mayor, who acted as chief mourner. Our Polish friends made not the slightest sign of any knowledge of the deed; no one in the town knew anything, and our only accomplice was Stepney Bob. I never heard that he was recaptured, and I have every reason to believe that he managed to escape altogether and get to America or some other part of the world, where his possible good private qualities had not been obscured by his public reputation as a cracker of cribs. Nor did it appear that any inquiry was made into the matter by the Russians. They did not acknowledge the *mouchard* who died fighting for his life with one of the people whom he was paid to watch. If he had friends or relations, none of them ever turned up. No doubt his was an assumed name, under which no one of his own people would be likely to recognize him.

When I recovered, and was able to be told everything, I confess to a feeling that Fortune for once had found a fitting death for this man.

We never told the captain, Leonard and I. But once, when Mr. Tyrrell had been lamenting in public over his great private loss, while he was perfectly oblivious of the little facts which preceded the death of his friend, I ventured to tell him privately the whole history. After that we never mentioned him again. The behavior of Leonard in suppressing the real facts was, like his conduct when first he introduced himself to the captain—what Mr. John Pontifex called a Wrong Thing.

CHAPTER L.

"LEONARD AND CIS.

I GOT well again and strong, but I was forbidden to do any teaching-work for two or three months, and had to give up all engagements for that space.

A holiday of three months, with Celia to come

every day, till I was strong enough to go out, and read to me; the captain to fidget about what was best for me to eat and drink; Leonard to tell stories, and sometimes the Rev. John Pontifex to come and sit with me, making profound remarks on the wickedness of men in general, his own Fearful Backslidings in his youth, and the incredible amount of repentance which they involved, the ignorance of the papists, and the strength of will possessed by his remarkable wife. Or Mr. Broughton would come round, and, by way of giving me a fillip, would read a little Greek with me, and then send round a few bottles of choice old port. Mrs. Pontifex sent strawberries and tracts; she also told me that my fever was no doubt intended to bring me more directly under the influence of her husband's ministrations. Augustus Brambler would come bursting in between the intervals of writ-serving and message-running, to tell me joyfully of the great business done by the House. And little Forty-four would come as often as she could; if no one else was with me she sat down, beaming with smiles, the tenderest of little nurses, and told me how they were all getting on—Forty-six developing into a real genius over his books—he was the son who subsequently became a reporter and journalist; Forty-eight, who had been caned at school for insubordination; and so on. I learned, too, from her, that the famous five-pound note had been, contrary to the donor's intention, distributed in new clothes, as far as it would go, among the whole family. A new lodger had been found who was at least more considerate than the former, did not dine at home, and talked to the children.

But, of course, Celia was the most regular visitor, and with her Leonard. They came together, and went away together; and in my presence he made shameless love, till sometimes the light of answering love flashed for a moment in her eyes, and then she drew herself from him blushing, and fell to busying about my pillows. Miss Rutherford drove over from Fareham, too. She turned out to be exactly what she looked at first sight—for that matter, people always do—a gentle, quiet, and careful old lady, who ought to belong to some planet where there are no such things as temptations, follies, or worldliness. She was always prettily and daintily dressed, and, as became an elderly lady, behind the fashion.

She had a sweet and pleasant face, with an expression on it which reminded one of Leonard, and when she spoke it was in a clear and precise way, like the ripple of a stream over stones. And, when she looked at her nephew, it was with an ever-growing wonder that there should be in the world such a boy as that to call her aunt.

Imagine all the sentimental and tender things that these two women, Miss Rutherford and Cis, would say to each other and to me as they sat beside my arm-chair while I was recovering. Think, if you can, how they were bound together by their common love for one man, and how they would read, as women always try to do, in each other's soul, dissatisfied until they succeed in finding, as in a mirror, each her own image in the heart of the other. Some women can have no half-measures; they must love wholly and trust altogether; and they must receive back as much as they give.

I tried to write down some of these tender scenes, but I have torn them up; words that are altogether sweet and precious when spoken sometimes look sentimental and meaningless when they are written down. What they came to was this, that two women tried to spoil one man by attention and thoughtfulness, and did their best to make another man vain by their exceeding love for him. I do not think either was much injured.

In September we all four, Miss Rutherford acting chaperon, went to the lakes together, in order to complete my recovery.

I have been in many places since the year 1858, and enjoyed many holidays. I have learned to know this beautiful garden set with all manner of delights, with mountain, stream, lakes, and forests, with all kinds of sweet flowers and singing birds to raise the heart of man, which we call England. I have dreamed away the hours in the pleasant land of France, among old castles by the stately Loire, or where the white cliffs of Normandy face their sisters of Albion. I have sat among the students of Germany, and wandered among the sweet-scented pines round mountain-feet, but I have had no holiday such as that. A dreamy time, when one was still weak enough to allow the sentiment of the situation to dwell in the mind, with a clinging for the last time to the robe of Celia, while all sorts of sweet phrases and cadences gathered themselves together and took shape in my heart, to be expressed in music when I might find time to set them down, with a new interest in listening to the talk, so truthful and so old-fashioned, of the lady whom chance had joined to our party, who ought to have been set in a bower full of flowers and fruit, with pictures about her of angels—not churchy angels—ladies could be pious twenty years ago without ecclesiastical rubbish—and faces of holy women full of trustful thought. With this the old admiration for Leonard, the strong, the brave, the handsome Leonard.

One evening, after sunset, we were in a boat on Derwentwater, Leonard, Cis, and I. Leonard was rowing us gently, letting the oars dip slowly in the smooth water, and then resting, while the boat made slow way among the wooded islets. Cis and I sat side by side in the stern; she was steering. The dark foliage was black now, and the lighter leaves were changed into a dark green. The lake was still and quiet; now and then a fish came to the surface with an impatient splash as if it really was getting too dull down below; or a wild-fowl flew over our heads with a whir; or a noise of voices, mellowed by distance, came across the water from the hotel; and far off, somewhere, a man was blowing a horn, and the echoes flew from hill to hill.

"'Blow, bugles, blow, set the wild echoes flying,'" Celia quoted, softly.

And then we were all silent again.

It was Leonard who spoke next. Deeper darkness had fallen upon us now, clouds were coming up in the west, and the breeze began to rise. The boat was quite motionless, on either hand an islet, before us in the distance the lights of the hotel reflected in the water. And again the sweet rolling echoes of the horn.

Said Leonard, speaking slowly:

"There is a thing I should like to tell you, Cis, if Laddy will let me. It is a thing which he told me in his delirium, a thing I ought to have suspected before, but did not, so dull and selfish as I was. Can you guess what it is?"

I could guess very well. There was nothing else that I could have told unknown to Cis already.

"I thought I was the only one who knew," Leonard continued. "But I was not; the captain knows."

"He knew before," I murmured. "Tell Cis, if you please, Leonard, if you think well. But, remember, it is all a thing of the past—forgotten—torn up by the roots."

"When I went away, Cis dear," Leonard began, "I left you in the charge of Ladislas. You were, I told him, in my conceited way, to be his peculiar trust; he was to look after you, to watch you, and to anticipate everything that you could want."

"And so he has done," said Cis.—"Haven't you, Laddy?"

"The reason I gave him was that I loved you, my queen, and that if things went well—all looks so easy to a boy—I proposed coming back, and telling you myself—in five years' time. Observe, please, the extraordinary selfishness of a boy of eighteen. At that age one cannot possibly think of anything but one's self. Well—I went away—I came back. Fortune had been kinder to me—far kinder than I ever deserved. I am loaded with the gifts of Heaven. Don't think me ungrateful, because I talk little about these things. I can only talk of them to you two. But that is nothing. While I was away, Cis, you grew from a child into a woman."

"Yes, Leonard."

"What I did not think of was that Laddy was growing too from a boy to a man—what I forgot was that there would be one girl and two men—that both men might love the same girl."

"Laddy!" Cis cried, with surprise and pain.

"Forgive me, Cis," I said, "Leonard has told you the truth. For a time—it was early this year, I think—what he hinted at was the case. I fought with it—and I beat it down, because it was hopeless, and because of the promise I gave to Leonard. But it is true that there was a time when I gave way, and—ventured to love you, otherwise than a brother may.—Why did you tell her, Leonard?"

"Because I want her and myself to feel more what we owe to you, Laddy, to your unselfish labor, your watchfulness, and the sacrifice of your own interests.—He loved you, and he gave you up, Cis. I wonder if any words of mine could make you understand what that meant to him?"

"It could never have been, Leonard," I said. "How could it? Celia was my sister always."

She laid her hand in mine, and one arm upon my shoulder.

"Always your sister, Laddy, dear. And henceforth more and more. There is now nothing that we have not told each other."

Henceforth, more and more. Yes, as the time has gone by, nothing has dimmed the steady trust and affection which Celia has showered upon me. I can see now, too, how different her life would have been, how wanting in fullness, had things been different, and had she married me. Some women are happiest with a man of action; how could the life of a dreamer like me satisfy the aspirations of a girl who worthily fills the place of Leonard's wife, and has stepped gracefully into the rank to which his success has raised her?

About that one thing we never spoke any more.

Leonard rowed us quietly back to the hotel, the lawn of which ran down to the water's edge. The garden was full of the visitors, for the evening was warm. They looked at us as we passed them, Celia with her hand on my shoulder in the old familiar fashion, staring with that half-impudent, furtive way in which English people at hotels look at each other and at strangers. In the *salon* was nobody but Miss Rutherford, quietly waiting our return.

She asked Leonard to take her into the garden for a walk, and left Celia and me alone.

Then I sat down to the piano, and collected my thoughts—all those musical thoughts of which I have spoken—and began to play them.

It was no improvisation, because the ideas had been long in my head, and many of them had been already noted down and tried over, but it was the first time I played the piece as a whole.

"What is it, Laddy?" Celia asked, as she saw me striving to talk to her in the old fashion, with my fingers on the keys, a language unknown to the outer world. "What is it? I cannot understand it yet."

"Listen, Cis. It is a love-poem of two young people—we will call them 'Leonard and Cis.' It tells how one went away, and how after five years he came back again, not a prodigal son, but covered with honor; how they fell in love at once, and how, after many difficulties, which were got over in a most surprising and extraordinary manner, quite as if these two lovers belonged to a novel, which, of course, they did not—and how they were finally married, and lived happily for ever and ever. Now, listen."

The symphony came forth from my brain clear and distinct, and, after a few bars of prelude, flowed straight on to the end. I have written plenty of music since, though I am not, as Celia affects to think me, a great composer, but I have written none that has pleased me so much, that dwells so constantly in my mind, and where I have found such fullness of expression. It is, I am sure, by some such masterful wave of passion that the highest expression and the noblest conceptions are brought together in the brain, and great works are produced.

I could see in my own music—and Celia could

see it as well—first in rippling movement showing peace and sunshine of early maidenhood; then the yearnings and unconscious reaching out of hands in thought for a fuller and richer life; then the awakening of love the glorious, like the awakening of Adam in the garden to look about with wonder, to walk with uncertainty, to feel his way in broad daylight, to fear lest it should be a dream, and that the vision should pass away, and all be nothingness again. Presently followed the growth of passion till it became a great river for strength. And, lastly, the wedding-hymn of triumph.

"Do you understand it, Cis?" I asked. "It is meant for you, and written for you. I shall copy it all out, and give you a copy, as my wedding-present."

"I think I understand—some of it," she replied. "How can your pupil understand it all at first? O Laddy! you have made me very humble to-night. How can men love women as they do? What are we, and what can we do, compared with them, that they should lavish such affection upon us?"

"Ask Leonard," I replied, laughing.

And outside the people were all listening in the garden. When I finished there was a general applause, as if I had been playing for them.

That night, an hour later, I heard below in the garden the voices of those who sat up still.

"Who was it playing?" asked a girl's voice. "He has a sweet face; it is a pity he is deformed."

"It is a certain Pulaski—Pole, I suppose. Patriot most likely. Count, of course, or baron, or duke"—this agreeable person was a man, perhaps the young lady's husband—"some adventurer, most likely, who goes about trying to pick up a rich English wife by his tale of misfortunes and his pianoforte playing. To-night's performance was an exhibition. No doubt he wants to fascinate that extremely pretty girl, almost as pretty as some one else I could name."

"Nonsense, sir, a great deal prettier; and, besides, she's engaged to the tall young man, who is a Captain Copleston and a Crimean officer. The old lady with them is a Miss Rutherford. She is his aunt, and plays propriety. I do not know anything about the piano-forte player."

"Well, I'm glad she is not going to marry a hunchback, piano-forte-playing Pole."

Listeners, as has been frequently observed, never hear any good of themselves. But I played no more at the Derwentwater Hotel, because next day we returned southward, and began all of us to prepare diligently for Celia's wedding.

CHAPTER LI.

"RING, WEDDING-BELLS!"

I HAVE come to the end of my story, the only story I have to tell from my own experience. How should it end but with a wedding? There is no romance where there is no love; there is no pleasure in the contemplation of love unless it ends happily, and is crowned with orange-blossoms; love is the chief happiness of life, as everybody knows—except, perhaps, John Pontifex—and has ever been completed by the wedding-bells.

Ring, wedding-bells, then; shake out the clashing music of your joy over all the fields, startle the farmer at his work, rouse the student at his desk, strike on the ear of the sailor out at sea, echo along the shore, mingle with the roar of the saluting guns to greet the ship's crew when they come home, so that they may know that during their three years' cruise the world's happiness has not altogether died away. Bring back to the old the memory of a day long gone by. Lift up the heart of the young with hope. Put ambitious thoughts of such a day of victory into the mind of the maiden who would like nothing better than to hear the bells ring for herself on such a wedding-morning, and walk in such a procession, decked with such white robes and such orange-wreaths. May they ring for every one of our girls, so that not one shall miss the love of a man but those who are unworthy!

They were married in the old church, the parish church, a mile from the town.

It is a day at the end of October, a breezy day of autumn; the clouds are driving across the sky, light clouds which leave plenty of clear blue sky and sunshine; the leaves are lying all about the old churchyard, drifting in heaps against the head-stones, and whirling round and round like unquiet spirits within the iron railings of the vaults; at the edge of the paupers' corner is a small new cross, quite simple, which I have not seen before. It is "In memory of Lucy, wife of Captain Richard Copleston, late of Her Majesty's Tenth Regiment of Dragoons, who died in this town in childbirth in her twenty-first year." Poor Lucy! Poor hapless victim of a selfish and cold-hearted villain! I knew that Leonard would put up some monument to his mother's memory, but he had not told me that it was done already. Doubtless he wished it to be there before his marriage.

The churchyard is full of people waiting to see the wedding; the honest folk from Victory Row are there. I shake hands with Jem Hex and his wife, and half a dozen more, who knew me in the old days of Mrs. Jeram's guardianship. They care less for the bride than for the bridegroom, these denizens of Victory Row. That a boy, so to speak, who used to run ragged about the logs on the Hard, who played on their own door-steps, who was accustomed to fight Moses daily, and on small provocation, before the sight of all; who actually, only the other day, did not disdain to remember the old time, and cowhided Moses again at the Blue Anchor—that such a boy should have become such a man was not, of course, unexpected, because out of Victory Row have come plenty of distinguished men—though not put down in books—Nelson's bull-dogs, mind you, and a few of Wellington's veterans. But that he should have developed to that height of greatness as to be a real captain in the army, and come home to marry nothing short of the daughter of the mayor,

and her a lady as beautiful as the day—that was, if you please, something quite out of the common.

Here is the captain, marching up the walk in uniform and epaulets as becomes a great occasion. Fall back, good people, don't crowd the captain. God bless the captain! Is the captain looking well to-day? And a happy day for him, too, if all's true that's said. Which, if any credit is due to anybody for that boy turning out so well, it's due to the captain. There was only one captain for these people. Other persons held equal rank in the navy, it is true; there were, for instance, Captain Luff, Captain Hardaport, Captain Bobstay—who was only a retired master with captain's title—all living not far from Victory Row; but they had their names assigned to them as well as their titles—ours had not. The old man, pleased to see so many people gathered together to do honor to him and his, stops and has a word to say to every one, and then goes on to the church, where he stands by the altar and waits.

The Rev. John Pontifex and Mrs. Pontifex his wife. The sailor-folk know nothing of them except as residents. So they pass, in the silence of respect, John Pontifex, with his long-tail coat on and a very, very voluminous white muffler round his neck.

The Rev. Verney Broughton. He it is who is going to marry them. Ah! quoth Jem Hex, and a right sort, too, as he *has* heard, either for a glass of wine or for a marriage, or for a sermon. From Oxford College he is, and once taught Master Leonard a mort o' learning, which, no doubt, helped him agin them Rooshans.

Among the people, bustling here and there with importance, is the historiographer, Ferdinand Brambler, note-book in hand. He goes into the church; comes out and dashes down observations in his note-book on a tombstone; listens to the people and jots down more observations; and then, absorbed in meditation, is seen standing motionless, as if grappling for the mastery of language. This is a great day for Ferdinand.

Round the church-door are all the younger members of the Brambler family, told off to strew flowers at the feet of the bride. Augustus is with them, bearing in his hands a pair of new white-cotton gloves, and an air of immense dignity. These crowds, this ringing of bells, strewing of flowers, and general excitement, all attest, in his eyes, to the greatness and glory of the Legal. Nothing in the Scholastic, not even a prize-giving, ever came near it. All the children are dressed in new clothes presented by the captain, so that they may do fitting honor to the occasion.

Leonard had pressed me to be his best man, which, indeed, was my proper place. But I wanted to play the organ for Celia's marriage, and I had promised myself to play my own love-symphony, which she alone knew. It was a fancy of mine. Forty-four, my faithful little ally and friend, begged to come with me to the organ-loft.

It is after eleven, and time to go up the stairs. What are those heavy heels tramping in the aisle? They are Leonard's company, with, I believe, about half the regiment, come to see Gentleman Jack married. I remember the faces of the rogues; they were at the Blue Anchor that night when he thrashed Moses, and made him give up the papers. Jem, the organ-blower, is in his place; Forty-four is by me to turn over the leaves. Stay one moment, Forty-four, let us look through the curtains again. There is Leonard going up the aisle. He is in uniform, as are his best men, as officers of the garrison—the young naval officer whom they call Grif, and a man of his own regiment. A brave show of scarlet and gold. His brother-officers are mostly in the church, the colonel among them.

"There comes Uncle Ferdinand," says Forty-four. "Oh, how beautifully he will describe it!"

All are there but the bride. She is coming. Now, Forty-four, for Celia's symphony.

The music rolls and echoes among the rafters in the roof. As I play I am a prophet, and see before me the happy years unfold their golden wings. All is as it ought to be; let those who have to sit during their lives outside the halls of human joy take pleasure in the prospect of others' happiness, and be thankful that they can at least look on.

"There is the bride," whispered Forty-four. "Oh, how lovely! oh, how sweet she looks!"

My wedding-hymn of prayer and praise—listen to it, Celia—I know that you are listening—as you stand for a moment before the altar beside your lover waiting for the words to be spoken. Listen! There is no joy, says the music, given to men and women like the holy joy of love; there can be no praise too full and deep for the gift of love; there can be no prayer more eloquent than the prayer for the continuance of love. Listen! it is the voice of your heart speaking in the music which rings and rolls about the pillars of the old church—I learned it reading in your heart itself—it is singing aloud to God in gratitude and praise, singing in the music where I have enshrined it and preserved it for you.

I finish my symphony, and the service begins. The words are faint and low as they mount to the organ-loft. I have pulled the curtains aside, and we watch, we three, Forty-four, Jem the organ-blower, and I, from the gallery, while Leonard holds Celia's hand in his, and they take the vow which binds them forever to each other. You are crying, Forty-four? Foolish child!

All is over, and they have gone into the vestry. Come, we have played Celia's symphony before the wedding with her hymn. Now for the march. Mendelssohn alone has reached the true, triumphal rapture. His music is the exultation of the bridegroom; it is a man's song—the song of a man who bears his bride away; the song of the young men who clap their hands; the jubilant blare of clarions and trumpets, which throw their music abroad to the winds that envious men may hear; and, though the women cry, like foolish little Forty-four, we drown their tears with song and shout. A bridegroom's song of triumph this.

But the bride is gone, and the bridal company with her; the children have strewed their flowers upon

the ground; the carriages have driven off; only the people are left; they, too, are leaving the church; in a few moments we shall be alone in the loft.

Consummatum est. Leonard has come home; Leonard has won his bride; Celia has gone from us. Shut up the organ, Forty-four; let us go down and join the wedding-guests. Somehow I do not feel much like feasting.

. . . . . .

Mr. Tyrrell was by no means the kind of man to make a mean show on this auspicious occasion. He had a marquee erected in his garden, where two tables were laid; he invited to the breakfast his whole staff of clerks with their families, including all who bore the name of Brambler—they had the second table; he would have invited all the regiment if Leonard had allowed him. As it was, there appeared a great gathering of his brother-officers. No nobler wedding-breakfast, Ferdinand Brambler reported, had ever before been witnessed in the town, and it reflected, he said, the greatest credit on Mr. Honeybun, the eminent local confectioner and pastrycook, who evinced on this occasion talents of an order inferior to none, not even Fortnum and Mason, the purveyors of princes. It may be mentioned that the occasion was one of which Ferdinand made four columns and a half. The wedding report ran to the butcher's bill for three whole weeks, and included a small outstanding account with the green-grocer, as Augustus himself told me. It was headed, "Wedding of the Mayor's Only Daughter," in large type, and was divided into headed sections, thus: "The Churchyard;" "Decorations of the Church;" "The Organist"—of whom he spoke with some reticence, for Ferdinand had feeling for my long friendship with bride and bridegroom; "The Bridegroom and his Gallant Supporters;" "The Arrival of the Bride;" "The Wedding," in which he gave the rein to religious feelings, and spoke of the impressive reading of Mr. Broughton, the reverent attention of those war-stained heroes, the officers of the regiment, and the tears of the bridesmaids; "The Departure," in which my own rendering of the "Wedding-March" was gracefully alluded to; and, finally, "The Wedding-Breakfast," in the description of which he surpassed himself, so that those who read of that magnificent feed went hungry immediately. I do not know what reward he received of Mr. Honeybun, the confectioner, but he ought to have had free run among the tarts for life. It was not at all a solemn or a tearful meal. Mr. John Pontifex, seated well out of his wife's sight, was between two young officers, to whom he communicated recollections of his early life at Oxford and the reckless profligacy which he had witnessed, and even—"Oh!" I heard him say, "it is a most Awful event to look back upon"—participated in and encouraged. He told them the Goose story, he told how he had once fallen in love with a young person—in fact, of the opposite sex—in Oxford, and how, excepting that single experience, "Love," as he said, "has never yet, I regret to say, reached this poor—cold—heart of mine." All this was very delightful to his two hearers, and I observed the rapture with which they plied him with champagne, of which he drank immense quantities, becoming frightfully pale, and listened to his reminiscences. No doubt Mrs. Pontifex would have been greatly pleased had she been present that evening in the mess-room, and heard the reproduction of these anecdotes. It was in the ponderous manner peculiar to clergymen of his standing and scholarship that Mr. Broughton proposed the health of the bride and bridegroom. He had known them both, he said, from infancy. There were no words at his command strong enough to express his affection for the bride, or, if he might say so as a Christian man, his envy of the bridegroom. On the other hand, for such a bride, there was none fitter than such a bridegroom. This young Achilles, having obtained from the gods a better fate than the hero to whom he likened him, had returned victorious from the wars, and won the fairest prize. They all knew Leonard Copleston's history, how the young gentleman, the son of a long line of gallant gentlemen, met adverse Fortune with a resolute front, and conquered her, not with a sword, but with a bayonet; what they did not know, perhaps, was what he could tell them, as Leonard's tutor, that he had always as a boy looked on the gallant soldier as the noblest type of manhood. "We all," said Mr. Broughton, "envy the man who fights; even the most popular priest is the priest militant; the glory of a poet or a painter is pale compared with the glory of a general; let us wish for Leonard Copleston a long career of honor and distinction, and for them both, my friends, for Leonard and Celia Copleston, let us wish that their love may endure beyond the brief moon of passion, and grow in depth as the years run on; that, in fact, like the finest port, age may only develop its color, bring out its bouquet, and mature its character!"

The old captain would not speak, though they drank his health. He had been sitting opposite to Celia, and when they said kind things about him—it was Leonard's colonel who said them—he only got up, and, with a breaking voice, said that he thanked God for the happiest day in all his life.

CHAPTER LII.

CONCLUSION.

"DRAW the curtains, Mrs. Jeram; we will shut out the night. I will light the candles."

It is nearly twenty years later than Celia's wedding. Mrs. Jeram is an old woman now, and blind, but it pleases her to do little things, and to fancy that she is still housekeeper.

Everything is changed in the town. They have pulled down the old walls and leveled the moats; the Dockyard has spread itself over the place where from Celia's Arbor we looked across the harbor. All the romance went out of the place when they swept away the walls and filled up the moats; it was a cruel thing to do, but no one seemed to remonstrate,

and it is done now. The Government wanted the ground, they said. There was plenty of other ground lying about, which they might have had. The mill-dam is filled up, and a soldiers' hospital has been built upon it; of course, the King's Mill has gone, too. All the old guard-houses have been taken down; the gates are no longer shut at night; in fact, there are no more gates to shut. The harbor, too, is not what it was; they have wantonly broken up and destroyed nearly all the old historic ships, save the one where Nelson died, and she is as naked and as empty as when she first came out of dock; only a few of the venerable hulks remain, and, I dare say, while I am writing these very lines, some economic lord of the admiralty is issuing orders for the destruction of the rest. The veterans with their wooden legs have all left the bench upon the Hard, and gone to the churchyard. The very bench is gone; steam-launches run about the harbor to the detriment and loss of the boatmen; and a railway runs down to the edge of the water. No doubt the improvements were wanted, but still one regrets the past. Of course, the sailor of the present is not like the sailor of the past; that we all know, and there is little room for sorrow on that score. A new suburb has grown up behind our old wild and desolate sea-shore; it is a fine place, and we are proud of it. We are all changed together with our surroundings, and the *vie de province* is no longer what it was in the days of Mr. Broughton and the captain. As for me, I have not changed. I am still a music-master. As I said at the beginning, you may read on my brass plate the name of "L. Pulaski, Teacher of Music and Singing." And people have quite left off the little confidential whisper, "a Pole of illustrious family—might enjoy a title if he wished." I have made a little name, not much, by certain things I have written, especially the symphony I wrote for Celia—the best piece I have ever done. Mrs. Jeram, as I have said, lives with me still, and talks about the old, old days. She is sitting before me now as I write. See—I leave the table, and open the piano. The tears come into her darkened eyes.

"It is the tune the captain liked," she says.

"To be sure it is:

> 'The wind that blows, and the ship that goes,
> And the lass that loves a sailor.'"

Almost needless to say that the old actors in the drama of my life are all dead.

The first to go was Mrs. Pontifex. She was, in her way, fond of me, and I should have been guilty of ingratitude if, in return, I had not conceived a respect for her. As I think of her, so gaunt, so unbending in principles and shoulders, so upright in morals and in backbone, so unyielding in doctrine and in muffins, I wonder if I am only forty, since she has left no one like her, and her race is extinct. She died of a cold caught through her adherence to one of her Christian privileges—never to light the fire in her sitting-rooms till November.

It was in 1860, a year about which I remember nothing except that it rained from June to October without stopping, and a wag announced in *Punch* that there would be no summer that year because the zodiac was taken up for repairs. We all laughed at that, and then some of us began to reflect with shame, and especially those who had been educated by the Rev. Verney Broughton, that very likely it was true, and that certainly we had no sort of idea what the zodiac was.

At the end of that continuous rain, then, Mrs. Pontifex died, and was gathered to her forefathers. A fortnight after I called on her husband. He was gardening, looking, as he stooped with his long, thin figure over the plants, very much like a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

He was weeding the strawberry-bed—the strawberries that year by reason of the long rains had been like turnips for size and taste. He rose when he heard my footsteps, and shook his head solemnly. In either hand he held an apple. It struck me that this was the first proof of recovered liberty, as in his wife's time he had never been allowed to eat any fruit at all. The prohibition, based on hygienic reasons, always appeared to me to have been issued because John Pontifex was particularly fond of fruit.

"I mourn not, Johnnie," he said, taking a bite out of the right-hand apple—"I mourn not for her who is departed. Rather," he added, with emphasis, biting into the left-hand apple, "I rejoice—ahem—with exceeding great joy." Whether he rejoiced because she was gone, or because of an assurance of her future, did not appear on the face of his statement. What he added was more obscure still. "Next year," he said, with a noise which might have been a sob and might have been a chuckle—"next year I shall have all those—ahem—those apples and strawberries to myself, Johnnie."

Shortly after this conversation he entertained at dinner the Rev. Mr. Broughton, the captain, and myself. It is noteworthy that the "beverage" of which his wife would never allow him to partake, was, on this occasion, and many subsequent occasions, freely produced. In fact, I should say, from recollection only, that he and his brother clergyman dispatched a bottle and a half each. It was orthodox port, but indubitably inferior to that possessed by the Perpetual Curate of St. Faith's.

One thing pleased Mr. Pontifex mightily to relate at that dinner. An unfortunate curate, enthusiastic but young, had the Sunday before preached a discourse in which his reverend senior fancied he saw glimpses of Tractarianism. So he waited till the misguided youth came out of the vestry, and then said to him, before the churchwardens and a small gathering of friends:

"Well, that was—ahem!—a most infamous sermon of yours."

And then he walked away, leaving the poor young man to seek such explanations and apologies as he pleased.

"The Tractarians," he said to-night, after the first bottle had brought up the natural pallor of his cheek to a ghastly whiteness—"the Tractarians may

use their arguments as they please, but to me they fall off as water from the back of the—ahem!—the proverbial duck, though I have never yet, I confess, poured anything but gravy upon the back of that—ahem!—toothsome delicacy, and therefore am not in a position to assert that water actually does run off their backs."

"The Tractarians," said the Perpetual Curate, whose face was quite purple, "are the Actarians. They are up and doing. They will make a clear sweep of pastors like me and idle shepherds like you, Brother Pontifex."

And now they are both gone, and the Perpetual Curate's prophecy has come true, and the Church has been reformed, with, of course, a small gathering of the foolish who want to go on beyond the bounds of reason. Such a service as I knew at St. Faith's would be impossible now even in the sleepiest city church. The duet between the parson and the clerk has ceased, the choir is trained, the hymns are improved, and the people are attentive. Speaking as a musician, I do not find the change altogether for the best. I miss the old melancholy hymns of Wesleyan origin which we used to sing. It seems to me that life is sad, the note of rapture at which we strike so many of the new hymns is strained and unreal. We are still too much like the poor little charity children of my youth, when, after the three long services of the day, through which they had been cuffed and caned into attention, they had to sing as a concluding or parting hymn—

> "Oh, may our earthly Sabbaths prove
> A foretaste of our joys above!"

I find—but then I am only a humble organist in a country town, and never go about in the world—but for myself I find too much elation, too much joy, to suit the gray tints and sombre colors of the working and sorrowing world.

Mr. Pontifex, the type of the old high-and-dry Calvinist, whose life was as strait-laced as his doctrine, with whom laughter was a sin, and every innocent recreation an occasion for repentance, is gone, and his place knows him no more.

Mr. Broughton, the jolly old parson of the high-and-dry church type, who enjoyed all that can be enjoyed by a scholar and a Christian in the world, strong in his firm and undoubting belief that the doctrines of the Church, faithfully held, avail unto justification, has gone, too. We have none like him now. I am not a theologian, and, in church matters, doubtless a fool. Nevertheless, I venture to say that I regret and mourn his loss. He was not only a gentleman—there are plenty of gentlemen still in the Church—he was not only a man of pure life and benevolent conduct, but he was a scholar. And I look in vain for scholars—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—in these later days. Here one, there one; but—ah! the old Greek scholar, massive and critical, is no longer to be found even among the sleeves of lawn; such scholars as we have mostly run to history—a study which Mr. Broughton held to be vain and illusory, except when it was the History of the Chosen People—and as regards all but modern history, fruitless, because history, he thought, repeats itself, and everything new has all been done before.

"We have Hume," he used to say; "we have Gibbon; we have Robertson; and we have the grand histories in Greek and Latin of the days when men were great. What more can one want? Let us sit down and read them; let us teach the boys to read them; and let us leave to restless witlings the task of laboring in a worn-out field."

Restless witlings! Dear me! Suppose Mr. Broughton had lived to the present day!

. . . . . .

Others have passed away who twenty years ago took part in the drama that I have tried, with pen unpractised, to relate. The two brothers Brambler sleep side by side in the new cemetery, cut off in their vigor, Ferdinand from a cold caught while in the excess of his zeal noting the incidents of a review during a hail-storm; Augustus from a sort of grief-consumption which seized him at the death of his brother. He "never joyed after;" and, though on Sunday afternoons he still maintained the imaginary state and splendor of a "gentleman sitting over his wine" at the front-window, it was a performance which brought him no pleasure but of that mournful reminiscence. And so he drooped and died, trusting that he would be remembered by posterity for his services in the Legal.

Friends there were who took charge of the little ones, from Forty-four to Fifty-three. And they all did well. My especial friend Forty-four is married, and has a row of children like herself, as apple-faced, as cheery, and as sanguine. I hope they will do better than their grandfather. She is good enough to maintain her old friendship toward myself, undiminished by the love she bears her husband and her offspring, and confides to me all her joys and sorrows.

. . . . . .

Let me pass to the last scene of my story.

After Celia married, and the regiment went away, the good old captain began to droop. He was nearly seventy years of age, it is true, but I thought he was hale and hearty—good for ten years more.

That was not so. Age crept upon him with stealth, but with swiftness. He still went out every morning, but his afternoon walks were gradually shortened, and finally had to be dropped altogether.

Then his friends began to call in the evening to talk to and cheer up the old man. Mr. Broughton would come with a story and anecdote of by-gone days; one or two old naval men, chums of his youth, would drop in for a glass of grog and a yarn; we became hospitable, and kept open house. And all went well, in spite of increasing weakness, until one day it became apparent that the old man could not go out to make his morning round.

Then, for the first time, I learned from him, though I had long known it, what the morning round had been, for more than twenty years.

He sat feebly in his arm-chair, patient, under the inevitable. Nothing was wrong with him, but the

weakness of extreme old age. His mind was bright and clear, as the last runnings of a cask of some noble vintage; but on this morning he realized that he must not think of going out any more, as he had been wont, in fair weather and foul. A cold east wind blew down the street, and a bright sun shone without warmth from a steel-blue sky.

"The end is growing near, Laddy," he said. "They will miss me when I am gone."

"Who, sir?" I asked.

He was silent for a space, thinking.

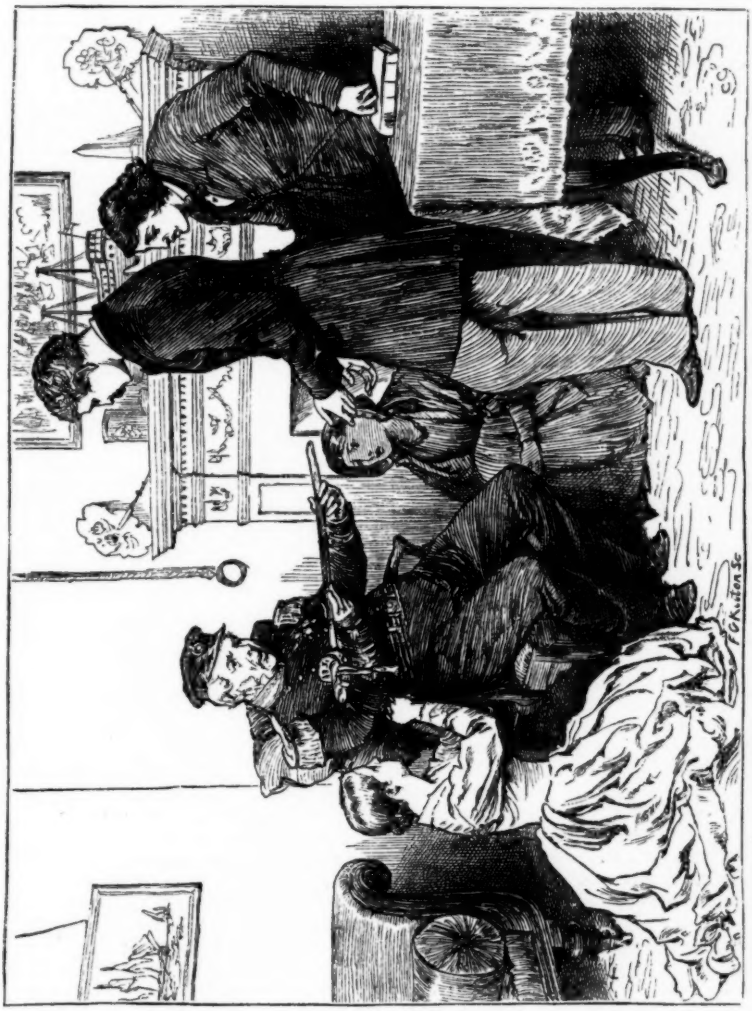
"To all of us," he said, "the Lord giveth his gifts in trust. To me he gave, besides her majesty's pension of two hundred pounds a year, a private fortune. No need to talk about it to you, Laddy, or to Leonard. It was not a great fortune, only this house and a hundred pounds a year, which my father saved up out of his pay. It was in the old prize-days."

I began to understand.

"So long as you and Leonard were boys," the captain went on, "we had the pension to live upon. Plenty for us all. And there was the hundred a year for which I was a trustee, you know. When you began to make an income the pension became part of the trust—"

"Of course, sir; I quite see that."

"That made three hundred a year. A good deal



"'Leonard'—his voice was very low now—'take the sword. It is all I leave you. God bless you, Leonard—Laddy—Celia—'"—Page 555.

ought to be done with such a sum. I doubt whether I have done the best; but I have tried—I have tried. If a man tries to do his duty—he may be stupid—but, if he tries, the Chief knows. You will find out, when I am gone, how far I have done the best, Laddy. It will be yours, the hundred a year and the house; you will use it, my boy, as you think best—not to follow up my lines, unless you think that the best way, but as a trust from the Lord, unless your income fails, when it will keep you from want. No, Laddy; no need to promise. We have not lived together for five-and-twenty years for me to begin distrusting. But, if you can, look after them, my boy. They are ignorant, they have no friends; they are degraded; you will meet at first with all sorts of insult and disappointment; but go on, never leave them; and you will end, as I have done, by winning their confidence."

I did not ask him who "they" were, partly because I guessed. The old seaport-town had dens of wickedness in it of which I have said nothing. Indeed, as children, though we went daily through the streets which reeked with every abominable thing, we saw and knew nothing—how should we? It is the blessed prerogative of innocence that it plays unhurt in the den of wild beasts, rides upon the lion, and walks scathless among the rabble rout of Comus.

All that morning the captain sat in disquiet. The current of his daily thoughts was interrupted. After our mid-day dinner he refused his pipe of tobacco and sat in the window, gazing silently upon the mill-dam pool, crisped by the cold east wind. His work was over; nothing more for him to do but to sit in the chair and wait for the end. That must be a solemn moment in a man's life when he realizes that everything is finished. The record complete, the book of work shut up, and, after all attempted and achieved, the inevitable feeling of unprofitable service.

Two days passed; the east wind continued, and grew colder; there was no hint at any possibility of going out; and on the third day there came, creeping stealthily, a deputation, consisting of two women, to ask after the captain. They stood shamefaced at the door, and, when I asked them to enter and see him, they hesitated and looked at each other. Then they came in, looking strange and abashed. I took them to the captain, where he sat in his arm-chair, and left them with him. Presently, sitting in the other room, I heard sobs and cries.

Afterward others came, not always outcasts: old graybeards who had been sailors, some of the wooden-legged veterans whom I remembered as a boy; aged women, their wives and widows; even young fellows, sailors themselves, their sons and grandsons. Among them all one woman who came the oftenest and staid the longest. I remembered her as the black-haired fury who once, as Leonard had reminded me, came one evening, and made the night air horrible with imprecations. Now she was subdued; now she sat as long as we would let her, silent and gazing with her black and deep-set eyes in the old man's face. It matters nothing about her history, which may be guessed—there is a dreadful similarity about these stories—an emotional, impulsive woman who loved and hated, sinned and repented, with the same ardor and vehemence, who believed in the captain, whose patience she had sorely tried, as one believes a gospel. He was her gospel.

The end came more quickly than we expected. One morning I saw a change, and telegraphed for Leonard and Celia to come quickly. The captain knew, I think, that his last day had dawned, for he asked me, when we had dressed him, if I would send for "the boy" and Celia.

They could not arrive before the afternoon. We allowed no one to see him except the one who would not be denied, and she sat crouched in a corner of the room, her arms round her knees, looking at the feeble figure in the arm-chair.

The captain spoke little; he suffered no pain; he was perfectly cheerful.

"Do you think they will come in time, Laddy?" he asked. "I should like to see them before I go."

Presently he slept, and so passed away the morning unconsciously, the black eyes of the woman watching him from the corner. Outside there were gathered knots of twos and threes, the women, the old salts, the outcasts, waiting sadly for news.

Leonard and Celia came at last. The old man woke as he heard "the boy's" voice, and eagerly held out his hand.

"Don't cry, my pretty. Don't cry, Celia, my dear," he whispered. "To every man his turn, and then we separate for a while, a little while, Celia, and then we shall all be together—you and Leonard and Laddy and I—all together, dear. Never to part again."

He was growing weaker every moment. I gave him a little wine. As Celia knelt at his feet, and laid her head upon his right hand, the other woman, as if jealous, crept stealthily from her corner and seized the left. The captain looked down on both, turned from one to the other, and then, disengaging his hands, laid one on either head, as if with a solemn blessing, equal alike for Martha or for Magdalene.

"Laddy," he murmured, "put on my uniform-coat and my cap, and give me my sword."

It was his fancy that he would die in the uniform of which he was so proud. We dressed him in the coat with epaulets; we pinned on his medals, we laid his sword across his knees, and we placed his undress-cap upon his head. And then we stood round him in tearful silence.

Presently a shiver ran through his limbs.

"Leonard"—his voice was very low now—"take the sword. It is all I leave you. God bless you, Leonard—Laddy—Celia—and you—you—" His hand felt out as if for the poor woman, who threw herself forward with sobs and passionate crying.

And then a strange thing happened. His voice, which had been sinking to a faint murmur, suddenly grew full again, and strong. He lifted his figure and sat upright. His eyes flashed with a sudden light as he raised his voice and looked upward. He

lifted his right hand to the peak of his cap—the old, familiar salute of a sailor—as he reported himself.

"Come aboard, sir!"

Then his hand dropped, and his head fell forward. The captain was dead.

. . . . . .

We buried him in the old parish churchyard, a mile from the town. Leonard's mother lay there, somewhere among the paupers; Wassielewski slept there in peace, Poland at last forgotten; Wassielewski's victim lay there too. The brand-new cemetery, which they opened a year or so later, would have been no fitting place for the remains of one who in death as well as in life should be among his fellow-men. And in that great heap of bones, coffins, and human dust, piled five feet above the level of the road, we laid the captain. It was not without a certain fitness that his grave lay next to the Paupers' Acre. When the great resurrection shall take place the captain shall lift his head with the ignoble and unknown herd for whom he gave his substance, and march along with them to that merciful Judge who knows the secret of every heart.

While we were yet half a mile from the church the funeral-procession was stopped. There was a crowd of old sailors and people of every degree, but chiefly of the lowest; some of them stopped the hearse, and others, opening the doors of the carriages, invited the occupants to descend. We complied, wondering. They quickly formed themselves into procession. First went the old tars, two and two, stumping on wooden legs, then came a band, then the coffin borne on the shoulders of sailors, sons of those who marched first; on the pall were the captain's cocked hat and his sword, and then we, the mourners, fell in.

The big drum, muffled, gives the signal—boum—boum—how many times before had that march from "Saul" awakened my soul to the glory and the mystery of death! the knell of warning, the wail of sorrow, the upward cry of yearning faith—and now I can never hear it again without my thoughts flying back to the old man, before whose honored remains a grateful and lamenting folk did this reverence.

Boum—boum—boum! A man who loved his fellow-men is dead. He will bring no more words of counsel, no more exhortations to duty, no more comfort for the afflicted, no more solace for the outcast. Boum—boum—boum! Wail and weep, clarions, with us whose hearts are sore. Boum—boum—boum! And yet it is but for a season. Change, O music! inspired of God, the souls of those who mourn till they become the souls of those who trust.

We are at the lych-gate. Mr. Broughton—none other—waits to read the service.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life—"

From every lane and court, from every ship in harbor, from every street, the mourners are gathered together: in the presence of death, in the graveyard, in the hopes of immortality, we are all equal—all brothers and sisters. The women weep aloud, there is not one who is unrepentant now; the tears run down the faces of the grizzled men who are standing by the grave of their brave and single-hearted old officer; none in all the world to harbor an evil thought, to raise an accusing word, against the man of seventy summers who lies in yon black coffin. Throw flowers upon him; pile the lid with flowers, with every flower a tear. The flowers will be crushed and killed by the cold clay, but the memory of the captain shall be green.

And of all the mourners around that grave there were none—there could be none—who mourned the captain more deeply, who loved him better, who owed him more—than the two boys whom he had picked from the very gutter, to bring them up in the fear of God and the sense of duty.

When Mr. Broughton came to certain words in the service his voice fell, and his speech was choked for a moment. Then he cleared his throat, and, looking round upon the folk, read out in clear and triumphant tones, as if the words should at once bring admonition as well as joy and consolation and hope for all of us:

"*In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.*"

[THE END.]

THE WASP'S NEST.

DARK-NICHED amid the vine-clad wall,
Bulges its rough drab-colored ball,
And in and out forever flit
Black, wiry shapes that people it.

Though dim to see, though frail and slight,
It teems with venom and with spite;
A bad, grim thing to dwell so near
The fragrant garden's balmy cheer.

Ah, why, amid the vast domain
Of Nature's variable reign,
Inevitably must we meet
The bitter mingled with the sweet?

Why do her loveliest moods relate
To stern antagonisms of hate?
Why from her beauties may we guess
Antipodes of hideousness?

These wasps that group in baleful bands
Among our temperate northern lands—
Perchance, as now, where softly glows
The velvet of some wine-red rose—

Are kindred, in strange, fatal way,
To the dread cobra, coldly gray,
That through fierce heat of tropic hours
Crawls deadly under Javan flowers!

NATHALIE'S ROMANCE.

I.

"THE matter lies this way," says Nathalie Byrne, folding her hands in her lap with a sigh, "if I were rich I would be romantic."

Her companion laughs. He is her cousin, Jack Olney, a young fellow with a sensible face and an athletic chest, which he is expanding by rowing, with the steady strokes of a practised oarsman, upon a small lake (otherwise pond) near the fashionable watering-place, or the watering-place which aspires to be fashionable, of V—— Springs.

"The question is, why should riches be necessary for romance?" he asks.

"A very foolish question," replies Nathalie. "Romance is a luxury, and, like all other luxuries, it belongs, or should belong, exclusively to wealth. When one is poor, one cannot *afford* to be romantic."

"In short, you mean that you cannot afford to fall in love—is that it?"

"That is exactly it. If I were an heiress I should think it charming to play Queen Cophetua to a beggar, if it chanced that the man I loved was that. But as Nathalie Byrne, pretty and portionless, with a keen taste for all the pleasures and luxuries which only money can buy, I must marry a rich man—and it is hardly likely that Providence will send any rich man across my path whom I can love as well as marry."

Jack looks at the piquant French face and the bewitching gray Irish eyes for a minute before he answers. Then he says:

"Such sentiments are commonplace as well as sordid, Nathalie, and I think, if I were you, I would leave them to commonplace girls. You can afford to be original, and, by Jove! the girl who has strength of character enough to be romantic is the one who is original in these days."

"They are certainly very mercenary days," says Nathalie, shaking her pretty head, "and, really, the way women talk—just as I have been talking—often disgusts one. But, at least, it is impossible to deny that we practise our code. Girls who avow mercenary sentiments don't make romantic marriages—though I believe it used to be very common for romantic young ladies to make mercenary marriages. Now, I like honesty; don't you, Jack?"

"Yes," replies Jack. "I like honesty, but I don't like mercenary sentiments, or mercenary marriages, either; and I should be sorry to believe that you are sincere in the first, or that you will ever make one of the last. I think better of you than you think of yourself."

"But you have no right to think better of me than I think of myself," cries Nathalie. "I know what I am, and what I am going to do—provided, of course, that I have a chance to do it. As yet, no millionaire has cast himself at my feet, but if one ever does, then you will see whether or not I shall make a *mariage de convenance*—things sound better in French than English when they are not very nice things!"

"Well," says Jack, "I am ready to make a wager. Let me see—what do you want most in the way of a trinket?"

"A set of cameos and pearls," replies Nathalie, promptly.

"If not beyond the measure of my purse, then—for I am not a bloated capitalist by any means—I will wager a set of cameos and pearls that you make a romantic marriage."

"Done, done, done!" cries the girl, clapping her hands gayly. "You don't know how much you have intensified my mercenary sentiments, Jack. I shall look out for an eligible match with renewed interest after this. Don't you think you might consider the matter settled, and let me have the set at once? It would be so much more useful to me before I find the millionaire than afterward!"

"No, I never pay my debts until they are due—sometimes, I regret to say, not even then—and I cherish the comfortable belief that I shall never be called upon to pay the set of cameos and pearls at all.—Halloa! that fellow has a fine string of fish. Didn't he startle you?"

"Very much," answers Nathalie, looking after a man who, having unexpectedly risen from a seat on the bank, is now walking away. "He must have heard all that we were saying."

"That does not matter—he is only a countryman turning an honest penny by fishing for the hotel, and our conversation, if he heard it, was unintelligible to him."

"He has a very fine figure," says Nathalie, still watching him. "I find it very interesting to talk occasionally for a short time to men of that order. They generally know what they do know thoroughly, and are much more agreeable than any 'educated whisker with a watery smile,' such as one flirts with every day, and dances with every night."

"Query: why do you waste your sweetness on the 'educated whisker with a watery smile'—what a capital descriptive phrase that is!—if you find him so unattractive?"

"Why, my dear boy, one must live, one must be amused, and while one is in the world one must do all that is expected of one. If I declined to smile on such men, and waited for heroes with strength of mind and force of character—heroes who probably would not glance at poor, little frivolous me after they came!—I should soon be pining disconsolate in a corner, and Aunt Georgy would be tearing her hair, and deploring the day she ever undertook to bring me out and pilot me safe into the haven of matrimony."

"I am afraid you are cultivating satire and cynicism, Nathalie."

"On the contrary, those are sentiments of profound wisdom, Jack—sentiments which will lead to cameos and pearls."

Jack shakes his head; but they have reached the end of the lake by this time, so, having assisted the worldly-wise young philosopher to disembark, he fastens the boat, and they take their way to the hotel.

Two or three hours later Nathalie, with a fleecy shawl thrown over her light ball-attire, is slowly promenading down the long piazza of the hotel on the arm of one of the most pronounced of the "educated whisker with a watery smile" type of men, when she encounters Jack hovering on the outskirts of the crowd that has assembled to witness the arrival of the stage-coach which has just driven up, laden with passengers.

"What is the meaning of this, Jack?" she asks, touching his arm with her fan. "Only the other day I heard you railing at the people who rush and stare at the dust-covered, travel-worn, new arrivals—and here I find you engaged in the same amusement."

"Not exactly," replies Jack. "I am not staring at the new arrivals for mere curiosity, but in order to discover if I know any of them."

"And why such a spirit of inquiry?—are you expecting anybody?"

"I've a vague hope that Geoffrey Parnell may appear. Some one mentioned in a letter from home the other day that he was thinking of coming up here."

"Geoffrey Parnell!" repeats the educated whisker, vaguely. "I think I've heard of him. Nice fellow, isn't he? But eccentric—does all manner of queer things—dying of consumption, too."

"Nothing of the kind," growls Jack. "A year or two ago he had a cough, looked a trifle badly, and the doctors said he was threatened with lung-disease; but he went off to the West, led the roughest sort of a life on the Plains and among the Sierras, and came back with fifty pounds added to his weight."

"Really? Knew I had heard something about him. Shall we continue our promenade, Miss Byrne?"

"Not just yet," says Nathalie. "I, too, have heard a great deal of Mr. Parnell, but I have never seen him, and I wish very much that he *would* come. Jack, he may have escaped your observation—had you not better go and consult the register?"

"I can," says Jack.

And he does—but only to return with the intelligence that Mr. Parnell has not arrived.

II.

At V—— Springs, as at most minor watering-places, life is by no means a whirl of dissipation. Indeed, it drags so dully most of the time, that Nathalie would fain betake herself to gayer scenes, but Mrs. Olney having decided that the waters are of benefit to her health, and Jack having discovered that the trout-fishing is excellent, they are both immovable, and she has no choice but to resign herself to the situation—which has certain palliating features. She is, undeniably, the prettiest, the most piquant, and the best-dressed girl at the springs, to which follows the natural corollary that she is the most admired. The feminine element is depressingly in the majority, but such masculine material as is afloat gathers around her with a unanimity of sentiment rather trying to the girls who look on. There is hardly a man who does not swear by her bright eyes, and riding or walking, lounging on the lawn, or dancing in the ballroom, she has cavaliers and to spare.

But the interest of those cavaliers is not returned in full measure. To Jack she confides that boredom in its worst form has marked her for its own.

"There is not a man here in whose face I would not like to yawn," she says, plaintively. "Oh, why does not Mr. Parnell come?"

"If he came, you need not flatter yourself that you would find *him* food for powder," says Jack. "He is not a flirting man himself, and he has no idea of being flirted with. I've often seen women try the game with him, and fail lamentably."

Nathalie gives a wicked glance out of her gray eyes, then laughs as she tosses a ball of zephyr-worsted into the air and catches it again.

"Only let him come," she says, "and we can try conclusions in any way he likes. *I* have no desire to flirt, except when flirting is forced on me. I could say to him, in the language of that old song Aunt Georgy sings sometimes:

> 'I'm a friend, if such thy heart desires;
> If more thou seek'st, a lover.'

Only let him come!"

"But, 'he cometh not,'" quotes Jack, in turn, with an unsympathetic laugh.

He certainly comes not; and, as the days go on, Nathalie's boredom drives her at last to desperate measures.

"The manner in which one or two of these men persecute me whenever I set my foot out of my room is maddening," she says, "so I am going to escape from them."

This resolve does not prove very difficult to execute. She puts on a short dress and a wide hat, takes a sun-umbrella—which is more useful as a staff than umbrella—and slipping from the hotel unobserved, goes out among the hills. When certain of having safely eluded pursuit, the sense of freedom becomes exhilarating in the extreme. There is in her character an element that in a man would be dare-deviltry, which delights in wild exploits of all kinds, and has often caused her to shock Mrs. Grundy by social transgressions which had their origin in the exuberance of restless spirits. Just now these spirits find a more harmless outlet in feats of physical daring which she is aware would call down Jack's condemnation, if Jack could witness them. But Jack is as far away as are the troublesome admirers. She is alone, entirely alone, with the hills, and the forest, and the rocks.

It does not take her long to determine that she

will do something to signalize this delightful state of affairs—something which will leave a record that cannot be doubted—nor does it require much deliberation to decide what this shall be. Distant two miles from the Springs is a large mass of granite known as the Castle Rock, which towers a hundred and fifty feet above the hill on which it rests, and the summit of which has only been reached by a few daring climbers of the sterner sex. If any woman has ever scaled it, no tradition of such an event has remained, and when Nathalie has once or twice expressed a willingness to attempt the feat, she has been summarily discouraged, not to say snubbed, by Jack. But *now* she can attempt it without hinderance, and (in case she does not break her neck) can leave some memorial on the rock, which will place the fact of her presence there beyond the reach of incredulity.

Animated with this ambition—and who shall say that the spirit with which an Alpine Clubman scales the Matterhorn is different in kind?—she desists from aimless wandering, turns her face in the direction of the rock, and being a good pedestrian, soon reaches it. Having, with much expenditure of breath, climbed the hill on which it rests, she pauses for a short time to regain her strength preparatory to the formidable undertaking before her. How formidable it is, she realizes fully as she looks up at the great mass of granite which towers far above the tallest tree-tops. Her courage begins to fail somewhat. It is so very high and so very steep, while the ledges and crevices of rock which serve as footholds are so exceedingly narrow, and so frightfully far apart!

"Suppose I fall?" she says, aloud. "I presume in that case I shall break my neck—and what a sensation *that* will be for the Springs! Or suppose I do not fall, but get on one of those ledges which are hardly large enough for a squirrel, and cannot get either up or down? Frank Brent got into such a position, and they had to send for a rope for him—but there is nobody to get a rope for me, and I should have to stay there all to-night, and perhaps all to-morrow, and perhaps— Oh!"

It is a startled exclamation, for at this moment, to her great surprise, and somewhat to her consternation, a man rises apparently out of the ground (he has really been lying on a cushion of moss near by), and advances toward her.

Does he mean to demand her money or her life? Some such fear flits through Nathalie's mind as she takes in his personal appearance in one swift glance, sees that he is roughly and shabbily dressed, and notes that he is large and muscular. But there is something frank and kindly in the expression of the large blue eyes which look out of a very sunburned face, that goes far to reassure her, together with the thought that desperadoes are comparatively unknown in this part of the world—the mountaineers, as a rule, being civil and obliging in the extreme. But is this a mountaineer? She begins to doubt that, as he lifts his hat and says:

"Pardon me, but I was so near that I could not avoid hearing your soliloquy. If you really wish to go to the top of that rock, and will trust yourself to my care, I think I can take you up and bring you down safely."

"I—I did not know that any one was near," says Nathalie, blushing. Who does not feel absurd when overheard audibly communing with his or her own spirit? "I am much obliged to you, but I don't care to climb the rock, I believe."

"No doubt you think it very presumptuous of me to offer my services," says the stranger, smiling, "but it seemed a pity that a young lady with such an adventurous spirit should not be gratified; and, having been up there several times, I felt sure I could take you safely. Accept my apologies, however."

He bows again—a bow which speaks volumes to Nathalie's society-bred perceptions—and, returning to the cushion of moss, takes up a book and moves away.

Nathalie's eyes follow him with an expression of regret. It *was* presumptuous in him to offer to take her to the top of the rock, but, granting that he had no sinister motive—and he does not look like a man capable of sinister motives — the offer certainly showed a very obliging spirit; and she feels that in declining it she has lost her best chance of ever reaching that desired eminence. Of course, it is out of the question to accept such a service from an entire stranger, who may be, and who looks rough enough to be, anything dreadful; but it would be a great triumph over Jack, and—and, in short, she feels that Mrs. Grundy has once more stood between herself and something which she would have heartily enjoyed.

"What slaves we are to conventionalities!" she thinks, despondently. "Here I am, out here alone, and yet, so great is the force of training, that I have acted exactly as I might if Aunt Georgy were sitting by. That man is a gentleman—his voice, his accent, his manner, all tell it—and, though he is evidently very low in the scale of worldly prosperity, that is no reason why I might not have found him a much more entertaining companion than those tiresome men at the Springs. And I have lost the opportunity of an adventure—a real adventure—all for conventionality. Nathalie Byrne, you are a humbug!"

In this conclusion, however, there is not a great deal of consolation, and certainly no assistance toward climbing the great rock. Must she go back without having ascended it, after all? She sits and looks at it; and, as she looks, the flame of resolve mounts high again. She will not go back without making an effort, at least, to do what no other woman has ever done. She is all alone now; it is not likely that another man will rise out of a bed of moss to interfere with her; and she will make the attempt, let the consequences be what they may.

She does not give her resolution time to falter, but, springing up, begins the ascent at once. She is a very good climber, and mounts with comparative ease for probably twenty feet; then comes about thirty feet of very hard climbing; then a few feet

farther, with courage and nerves failing; and then—a stop!

What is she to do? The question is a very serious one, for, looking around, she sees no possible foothold by means of which she can mount higher, and to descend seems quite as difficult. It is no trifle for the steadiest head to be perched on a narrow ledge fifty or sixty feet above the earth, and Nathalie feels a mist come over her sight as she glances downward. She leans against the rock, which rises nearly a hundred feet higher, and, with her heart in her throat, asks herself what can she do. Shall she call for aid in the vague hope that the man whose assistance she declined may be lingering near? or shall she cry, like the child she feels herself to be? "Crying will do no good," she thinks, choking back some tears which are very near the surface; "I must call." Then she lifts her voice, and, with as near an approach to a shout as she can accomplish, cries—

"Help!"

III.

"HALLO!"

It is a clear, ringing shout which answers from among the greenery below, restoring her heart to its right place in a moment, and banishing from her mind all thought of tears.

"It is that man!" she says to herself. "I knew it!"

What she means is that she knew the man had not gone very far, and what she chiefly feels is keen mortification at being found in such a helpless position. She glances downward—yes, it is the same figure which she saw a little while ago that is now striding toward the rock, the same sunburned face which is lifted upward, the same clear eyes that take in her position.

"Hold on!" he cries. "I will come to you."

He begins to climb as he speaks, and Nathalie forgets her perilous situation in watching his agile movements. He swings himself from point to point with so much ease and rapidity that she recalls accounts which she has read of the feats of cragsmen, and feels sure that he has had some such training. In a minute or two he has reached, not her side exactly—for there is no room for him on the narrow place where she stands—but a point sufficiently near to render her assistance. Oddly enough, his first words are an echo of her last ones.

"I knew you would do it," he says, "so I thought I would remain within call in case of an accident. Lucky I did, else you would have been obliged to stay here all day, and perhaps all night, too. You have missed the climbing-points, and you could not have got a foot higher to save your life. Give me your hand—are you giddy?"

"Not much—hardly at all now," she answers, with a sense of surprise at the peremptoriness of his tone. She gives him her hand, and feels her nerves steadied instantly by the firm clasp in which it is taken. He directs her how and where to place her feet, and, himself taking positions which seem to threaten instant destruction, guides her step by step to a place of comparative safety. Then they pause, each draws a deep breath, and Nathalie says:

"How sorry I am to have given you so much trouble! You must think me very foolish and very reckless—but I have wanted so long to get to the top of this rock!"

"I think you a very adventurous young lady," he answers. "I believe I said *that* when I offered my services as guide—which you declined."

"I was sorry I had declined them after you were gone," she says, frankly; "but you know—that is, you may imagine—it did not seem quite—quite—"

"I comprehend entirely," he says, with a smile, "but out in the greenwood Mrs. Grundy holds no sway. I am Robin Hood, at your service—and I renew my offer to take you to the highest battlement of the castle if you care to go."

Nathalie's eyes sparkle, and her color rises. It *is* to be an adventure, after all—and one worth talking of! All the gayety of her nature bubbles up in tone and glance as she replies:

"I am the Princess Amaryllis, from Fairyland, and I *do* care to go to the highest battlement of the castle, and I shall be infinitely obliged if you will take me there."

"Your highness shall be taken there immediately," he says. "Now let me direct your attention to the fact that the mistake you made in climbing was at this point—you swerved too much to the right, instead of turning to the left. Give me your hand again, and plant your feet exactly where I set mine—very cautiously."

As they mount higher and higher, Nathalie appreciates how it is that so few men have cared to risk their necks in scaling this massive rock. It is a feat requiring a cool head, steady nerves, and great agility. Her own courage would fail many times but for the firm grasp which holds her hand, the quiet voice which directs her movements. At last it is over—one final effort and they stand triumphantly on the highest point.

"Victory!" she cries, as soon as she recovers her voice sufficiently to speak. "How glorious it is to gain at last the summit of one's desire! But Jack will never believe that I have been here—never!"

"We must find a means to convince him of the fact," says her companion. "Does Monsieur Jack ever come here himself?"

"He has been here once," she replies. "Jack is a very good climber—almost as good as you are. But he said that it was absolutely impossible for me to come—and here I am!"

"And, being here, you must leave some proof of your presence. What shall it be? Shall I carve your name on the rock?"

"No—for Jack would know at once that *I* could not do that. It must be something I can do myself. Let me see"—glancing round—"I might write something if I had anything to write with."

"I think I can furnish something," says Robin Hood, beginning to fumble in the pockets of his coat, and presently drawing forth a fragment of

white chalk. "If you write with this on that piece of smooth rock yonder, it is not likely to be erased before you can send Monsieur Jack to read it."

"How very kind you are!" says Nathalie, taking the chalk eagerly. "I really think it is *you* who are the fairy, since fairies fulfill the wishes of people, just as you have fulfilled mine. Where is the place I had better write?"

She follows him to the spot which he indicates, and, kneeling there, traces with the chalk these words:

"ROMANCE *vs.* CAMEOS AND PEARLS."

"There!" she cries, with a laugh that rings out like a peal of silver bells. "Jack will never doubt who wrote that! Not only is the sentiment exclusively mine, but he will recognize the writing at a glance."

"It is very characteristic writing, and bold for a young lady," says Robin Hood, regarding the legend critically. "The sentiment, however, seems involved in some obscurity—why should romance be *versus* cameos and pearls?"

"Because it always is," replies Nathalie, with more energy than lucidity. "Outlaws who live in the greenwood do not know much of such things, I suppose; but fairies are compelled to see a great deal of the worldly side of life, and I assure you there can be no doubt of the sound wisdom embodied in that sentence."

"Indeed!" he says, transferring his glance from the sentence to the piquant face of the speaker. "Outlaws, as you observe, do not know much of such matters; but I did not fancy that fairies were greatly more worldly-wise. The advance of civilization has penetrated even into Fairyland, however, it appears."

"Yes," says Nathalie, with a sigh. "I fancy that the greenwood is the only place into which it has not penetrated. But I ought not to have written that sentence here," she adds, abruptly. "It seems altogether out of place—frivolous, and little, and wretched, in the face of such a scene as this."

Still kneeling on the rock, she looks out over the broad and beautiful prospect, which is truly one to fill the mind with high and noble thoughts. The wide sweep of azure hills trending upward toward the sky, the green valley, the sea of forest, and, above all, the infinite, bending sky—all speak, to one who can comprehend, of things as far above the trivialities of social existence as the heavens are above the earth. She glances quickly at the face of the man beside her.

"If you really spend your life among such scenes," she says, "you ought to be a poet or a sage."

"And unhappily I am neither," he says, with a laugh. "I am only an outlaw, as you have said—a man beyond the pale which 'good society' recognizes, and who would not give a button for that recognition if it could be obtained."

That this is no idle boast is evident. Regarding him as he lies on the rock, with his hat thrown carelessly aside, Nathalie sees the bold, careless spirit which looks out of the frank eyes, while she also observes that his face, without being regularly handsome, is both refined and intellectual. Her interest deepens, and with her interest a determination to learn something further, since a fairy and an outlaw alone on an inaccessible rock may surely speak their minds as freely as they like.

"I am very sure that you could win social recognition if you cared to do so," she says. "You are certainly not—not an ordinary person."

"Your highness is very good," he answers, in an amused tone. "I have heard that once or twice before in my life—and it epitomizes my story. If I were an ordinary person, I should find no difficulty in spending existence in a social treadmill; but, being blessed or cursed with an extraordinary love of freedom and adventure, I prefer 'a crust of bread and liberty.'"

"And are you a *real* outlaw—I mean do you live in the woods all the time?" she asks, with amazement beginning to take the place of curiosity.

"Well, not all the time—not in winter, for example," he replies, with a very quizzical expression. "I am even inclined to prefer the shelter of a roof on stormy days, not to speak of stormy nights."

"I suppose you never come near the Springs?"

"The Springs!" (in a tone of unmitigated contempt). "There is no place which I give so wide a berth to as that. All the worst features of social life, the gossip and rivalry, the petty interests and more petty spites, meet at a watering-place, and are intensified by utter idleness."

"How true!" says the Princess Amaryllis, with a sigh. "But we can't all turn outlaws; and, if one is stranded at such a place, what is one to do?"

He waves his hand toward the wide expanse below them.

"Can you ask," he says, "when Nature lies all around you, with the myriad secrets of her hills and streams?"

"But suppose they *are* secrets to one, and suppose one has no interpreter? Not but that I admire Nature after a fashion; but I suppose it is a fashion you would hardly deign to recognize."

"All fashions are good in their degree: we climb by steps, you know."

"Very hard steps sometimes, as my recent experience assures me. It is all very well, no doubt, if you are a man, able to climb where you like and do what you like; but a woman—"

"Can surely ask no better fate than to be a fairy princess."

"I don't know; even fairy princesses don't always find things just as they want them."

"That may be, perhaps, in order that they may choose between apparent good and real good. The whole wisdom of life is in that."

Looking at his threadbare coat, in contrast with the serene cheerfulness of his face, Nathalie feels compelled to ask another direct, personal question.

"Do you think you have displayed wisdom in *your* choice?" she inquires.

"I am perfectly sure of it," he answers, confidently; "and the best wish I can make for you is that you may choose as wisely."

"Thank you," she says; "I shall remember your advice—and your example. Now I must ask you to take me down. I have been gone so long from Fairyland that I fear there will be a hue-and-cry about me."

"And I have been *in* Fairyland," he says, as he rises to his feet. "What a wonderfully lucky thing it is that I chanced to be on this hill to-day!"

IV.

THAT Nathalie takes her way meditatively back to the Springs is not remarkable, for she has many things to meditate upon. She has had an adventure of the first order; she has been to the top of the Castle Rock; and she has made a new, a mysterious, a most interesting acquaintance. As she thinks of the latter, she feels more perplexed than it is possible to express. She has heard vaguely of men who, in violent reaction against the cramping influences of modern society, have rushed back to the wild freedom of hermits and nomads—can it be possible that she has encountered such a man? But she has also heard that these self-made outlaws are usually disappointed and misanthropical, while this man is certainly nothing of the kind. No healthier spirit ever looked out of human eyes than shines out of his. Altogether, she is wholly at sea in her reckonings with regard to him; and she says to herself, "I will ask Jack—perhaps *he* will know."

But, to her great surprise, she finds, when she reaches the Springs, that Jack has gone. He has been suddenly called away on important business, and could not even wait to bid her good-by.

"He will not be back for two weeks," says Mrs. Olney, "and he desires that we will stay here until he returns. I am sorry on your account, Nathalie; you seem to be so tired of the place."

"I am not tired of the place," says Nathalie; "but I am tired to death of the people. One must be philosophical, however, and two weeks will not last forever. I have discovered a new amusement, Aunt Georgy—admiring Nature. It is better than flirting with stupid men without an idea."

"Take care or you will be bitten by a rattlesnake," says Aunt Georgy, to whom, in the mountains, Nature and rattlesnakes are synonymous terms.

Nathalie laughs, not so much at the caution as at the thought of what her aunt would say if told the history of her late adventure. But she knows better than to make any such rash confidence. She would have told Jack, if Jack had remained to be told; but every virtuous and well-ordered hair on Mrs. Olney's head would bristle with horror at such a recital, and Nathalie's chances of ever meeting Robin Hood again would be small indeed.

That she has deliberately determined to meet that interesting outlaw cannot be said, but we are not by any means always frank with ourselves. She has had a taste of the delights of freedom and adventure, and to sit down after *that* to gossip and crochet is more than she can think of doing. Two long, idle weeks stretch before her—in this time shall she not discover some of those secrets of Nature which she has been advised to seek? And if, by any chance, she shall meet again the man whose life and character have taken such strong hold of her imagination, what harm can there be in talking to him, since he does not even know her name?

It is not difficult to imagine what answer is returned to such questions as these. There are few of us who have not discovered that we can generally find an excuse for doing anything which we very much wish to do. Mrs. Olney, being well accustomed to Nathalie's freaks and caprices, does not think of interfering with the solitary rambles for which the latter so suddenly develops a passion; and for the surprise and comments of her admirers and acquaintances in general Miss Byrne does not care a whit.

Needless to say that not many days elapse after her first adventure before she encounters Robin Hood again, and, after this, their meetings become very much an accustomed thing. He acts as her guide to wildwood haunts which she would never discover without his aid; and, by the side of many a sweeping cascade, in many a green glen, and on many a breezy height, they sit and talk of more things than have ever entered the somewhat narrow compass of Nathalie's intellectual life before. Day by day her interest and her curiosity with regard to her companion deepen. He knows—or it seems to her that he knows—everything which the widest culture embraces. He has traveled alike over the Old and the New World; he is as thoroughly conversant with men as with books; he appears to possess no ordinary artistic knowledge; and his physical capabilities are simply magnificent. Met under the most ordinary circumstances, such a man would be likely to impress himself strongly upon the fancy of a girl to whom the conventional type of man has before this proved wearying; but, surrounded by an atmosphere of tantalizing mystery, and associated with everything most bright and beautiful, most wild and exhilarating, in the boundless freedom of Nature, it is not singular that the thought of him should soon dominate every other thought in Nathalie's mind.

She is not without certain strong misgivings of the wisdom of her course, but she puts them aside with characteristic recklessness. "Such a romance does not come more than once in life," she thinks. "It will be something to remember as long as I live—something to make my pulses throb when I am old and formal, fitted to my petty part! If Jack were here, I would tell him; but he is not here, and to tell Aunt Georgy would be the height of absurdity. She would not understand—anything. Oh, dear me! how infinitely small and petty all these horrid men seem after Robin Hood! Am I going to measure all men by him hereafter? And am I awake or living in a dream? To think that I know him better than I ever knew anybody before, and yet I do not even know his name! I always thought I should be

romantic if I had a chance—and if *this* is not romantic, I wonder what on earth could be!"

It becomes a trifle too romantic as the days go on, and the time for Jack's appearance draws near. Mrs. Olney has decided to leave the Springs as soon as he returns; and when Nathalie thinks of this—which means bidding farewell forever to her greenwood friend—she experiences a pang which warns her that she may yet have to pay a heavy penalty for the dream in which she has been living. Despite her recklessness, she is not without a grain or two of common-sense, and she rouses suddenly to a consciousness of standing on the brink of a danger too serious to be trifled with, and from which she must draw back. In consequence of this realization, she takes her customary walk on the day before Jack's return, with spirits greatly depressed and a face which reflects this depression. Taking her way to a wild and lovely glen, which has become by tacit agreement a place of rendezvous for Robin Hood and herself, she sits down on a large gray stone by the side of a whirling stream to await his coming.

"For the last time, I suppose," she thinks, dejectedly, "and what an idiot I am to feel so badly about it!"

Idiot or not, she makes a wonderfully pretty picture, Robin Hood thinks, as he comes down the almost precipitous hill-side, with a gun on his shoulder and a dog at his heels.

"I kiss your hands, my princess," he says, gayly, "and I should have been here before, but that I have tramped ten miles or more in order to bring down a deer for you. Did you not say that you wanted a pair of antlers?"

"I believe I did say so," Nathalie answers, "but I never imagined that you would go and kill a deer in order to gratify me. It was very good of you—I mean good to me, though I think it was hard on the deer—but where is it?"

"My companion on the chase—the worthy farmer and hunter with whom I lodge—has it on his horse, and he will take it to the Springs and leave it for you. Venison is almost as desirable as antlers, you know."

"Leave it for me!" she repeats. "But how does he know who I am?"

"Because I told him for whom to leave it," replies her companion, with the smile she has by this time learned to know exceedingly well.

She looks at him a little startled. Strangely enough, she has fancied her personality as enveloped in mystery to him as his is to her.

"Then *you* know my name?" she says.

"Yes," he answers, "I have known your name as long as I have known you—in fact, I may say that I knew it before I knew you."

"And yet you have never, never once addressed me by it!"

"Why should I? You have preferred to be the Princess Amaryllis to me, and as the Princess Amaryllis I have regarded you. If we ever meet elsewhere than in the merry greenwood, I shall not presume on our chance association to claim acquaintance with Miss Byrne."

"We will talk of that after a while," she says. "I see that you do know my name. Have you any objection to telling me how you learned it?"

"None at all," he answers. "About three weeks ago I was fishing one day in the little lake near the hotel, when I saw you for the first time. You were in a boat with a young man whom you addressed as 'Jack,' and you were talking—pardon my having overheard your conversation, but you kept so close to the bank that I could not avoid doing so—of romance *versus* cameos and pearls."

A burning blush sweeps into Nathalie's face. She has never forgotten that flippant conversation, and that this man of all men—this man with his intense scorn of things mercenary and conventional—should have overheard it, seems almost too hard to be borne.

"I remember you now," she says, slowly. "You rose up and walked away. I am sorry you should have overheard the nonsense I was talking; but—I suppose it does not matter. But that did not tell you my name."

"No—but this did. I found it in the boat after you left."

From an inner pocket he draws an envelope, and from this produces, not a letter, but a handkerchief, in one corner of which is written "Nathalie Byrne."

"I see," says the owner of that name, looking at it. "So, all the time my foolish little mystery was no mystery at all to you! And now I think you owe it to me to tell me *your* name."

"I will do so presently," he answers. "But I have something to say first, and it is this: I am not a man to be readily smitten by women, yet I think I fell in love with you that day I saw you in the boat. I was charmed with your face, with your voice, with your laugh, and I felt quite as sure as your companion did that you made a great mistake in fancying yourself capable of a mercenary marriage. I thought, then, that I should like to test you, and Fate has kindly granted me the opportunity I desired. You know all that there is to know of me except my name, which is honest, and my fortune, which is slender. If I have won any place in your heart during the time that we have known each other—if there is any hope for me in the future, provided I prove myself worthy of your regard, *not* by the amount of wealth that I possess, but by the integrity of my life—then let me see if you are brave enough to put your hand in mine and tell me so!"

He extends his hand as he speaks, with a gesture so expressive of confidence and power—the confidence of a man who has grasped whatever he desired in life, the power of a man who has held whatever he grasped—that Nathalie feels, as she has felt from the first, that her will is completely subordinate to his. She does not put her hand in his, but neither does she think of the apparent madness of listening to such words from an absolute stranger.

She only looks at him and says, in a tremulous voice:

"This is not just. You know everything that there is to know of me, while I know nothing of you—"

"You know all that is of importance," he answers. "I have laid bare my nature and my mind to you. I am a gentleman by birth, I am an erratic and struggling man, but one on whom there rests no stain of any description. Once more, are you brave enough — here, where we have learned to know each other—to tell me the truth?"

His tone has the ring of a challenge, to which Nathalie's spirit leaps up in reply. Her color rises, her eyes brighten, she hesitates only an instant longer, then her hand falls like a snow-flake into his, and she says:

"The truth is, that I have lost my heart to Robin Hood; but I fear he is too much of an outlaw to be introduced to Aunt Georgy and Jack."

Robin Hood kisses the little hand before he replies:

"You will not be asked to do so. We will leave Robin Hood out in the greenwood where he belongs. Here is the man you shall introduce."

He turns over the envelope in which her handkerchief was kept, so that she can read the address. She utters a slight cry as she does so, and looks up with dilated eyes.

"Geoffrey Parnell! Jack's friend! Oh, what will Jack say?"

"That romance is better than cameos and pearls —from his point of view," is the laughing reply.

VARIETIES OF VERSE.

"They are a school to win
The fair French daughter to learn English in;
And, graced with her song,
To make the language sweet upon her tongue."
BEN JONSON, *Underwoods.*

IT is curious to note that the only fixed and rigid form of verse which we English-speaking peoples have been willing to adopt permanently is the sonnet; and even in the construction of that we at times take strange liberties—licenses, rather, to make a purist in metrical forms stand aghast. It is almost equally curious to note that the first impetus toward the introduction of new forms comes to us from France, a country where, until within the last half-century, verse has been as prim and precise, as empty and as soulless, as metrical prose by any possibility may be. But under the inspiration of the romantic revival which marked the dying days and final downfall of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon, and especially under the influence of the extraordinary vigor and vitality of Victor Hugo's earlier verse and prose, the fresh young blood of France began to course through more poetic channels, inventing new forms to vent its new-found feeling, and filling old forms again with the current of new life. The young poets went back to the verses of the troubadours and *trouvères*, and to the metrical forms of the fourteenth century; and, indeed, they went whenever they hoped to find a form or a suggestion of style suitable and worthy of modern reproduction and resuscitation; the stranger, the odder, the more exotic, the better. The *virelai*, the *rondeau*, the *rondel*, were brought again into favor. The English ballad, with its wealth of suggestiveness and lyric possibility, was fit indeed to the minds of young writers fresh from the first reading of "Notre-Dame de Paris." Hugo called one collection of his poems "Odes et Ballades"—though, as a critic objected, it contained neither odes nor *ballades*—for the French *ballade* is radically different from the English ballad, and it was the English lyric which Hugo had in mind, not the French form of verse. In spite of the tendency toward the Gothic, none of the involved metres of the German Minnesingers were, as far as we find on record, at any time imitated. But English legends and lyrics, and fashions of all kinds, found frequent copyists, even to the verge of affectation—M. Auguste Maquet, the collaborator of Dumas, called himself for a while Augustus MacKeat, and Théophile Dondée became for a season Philothée O'Neddy! These eccentricities slowly passed away, and the good they had clouded remained. French poetry to-day is more like poetry and less like Pope than it has been for several centuries. Hugo's example has been followed—nay, even improved, for "the master," as his followers affectionately call him, is, like other great geniuses, often careless, and the art of Théophile Gautier, and of Baudelaire, and of Théodore de Banville, is above all things finished, and polished, and perfect.

And to-day the inspiration which the French poets caught from their study of the early forms of French verse is beginning to be transmitted across the Channel to England, and we now and then see an English *rondeau* or *villanelle;* and the sight is ever welcome. English *vers de société*—and here it may first be noted that the work of the French poets seems likely in England only to affect that small and refined class of literary work, dainty, and delicate, and delightful, as an antique cameo, which we have to call by the French name *vers de société*, solely because we have no English equivalent for it—English *vers de société*, which drooped for a while between the death of Praed and the coming of Mr. Locker, has been cursed by too great adherence to the eight-lined stanza in which Praed excelled, and which he probably derived from Prior. Mr. Locker, long the leader of the modern English school of

vers de société, followed too closely in the footsteps of Prior—although he borrowed one beautiful metre from "The Last Leaf" of Dr. Holmes. Mr. Austin Dobson, who in finish, and polish, and point, in all the externals of verse, is running Mr. Locker hard, and in the essentials, the poetry within the verse, the precious ointment behind the delicate tracery of the jar, is perhaps running ahead of him—Mr. Dobson, seeking fresh fields and pastures new, has taken up the study of the revived French forms, and, in his recent volume, "Proverbs in Porcelain," presents us with what are probably the first specimens in English of the *pantoum*, of the *rondel*, and of the *ballade*.

Of all the forms he tries, Mr. Dobson seems most pleased with the *rondeau*, for he gives us not one specimen, but half a dozen; from which it would appear that the form is one which lends itself readily to the exigencies of the English language, and one, therefore, which we may hope to see generally adopted, and second only to the sonnet, than which it is perhaps a little more difficult. The word *rondeau* has been applied inaccurately in English to any poem in which the first words of the stanza were repeated at the end. The one specimen of this sort which all may remember, is Leigh Hunt's brief and beautiful—

"Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets upon your list, put that in—
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old; but add—
Jenny kissed me!"

How far this is from the real form of the *rondeau* can readily be seen by comparing it with this imitation by Mr. Dobson of a French *rondeau* of Voiture's:

"'YOU BID ME TRY.'

"You bid me try, blue eyes, to write
A *rondeau*. What!—forthwith?—to-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;
But thirteen lines—and rhymed on two—
'Refrain,' as well. Ah, hapless plight!

Still, there are five lines—ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright
My easy Muse. They did till you—
You bid me try!

"This makes them nine. The port's in sight;
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now, just a pair to end with 'oo'—
When maids command, what can't we do?
Behold! the *rondeau*—tasteful, light—
You bid me try!"

The idea of this *rondeau* of Voiture's, letting the *rondeau* turn upon the difficulty of making a *rondeau* at all, is due to Lope de Vega, who used it in a play. The Spanish sonnet has been imitated in French, in Italian, and in English; and, by way of comparison, an English version, by Edwards, the author of "Canons of Criticism," which is given by Lord Holland, in his "Life of Lope de Vega," may as well be copied here:

"Capricious Wray a sonnet needs must have;
I ne'er was so put to't before—a sonnet,
Why, fourteen verses must be spent upon it.
'Tis good, however, I've conquered the first stave.
Yet I shall ne'er find rhymes enough by half,
Said I, and found myself in the midst of the second:
If twice four verses were but fairly reckoned,
I should turn back on the hardest part and laugh.
Thus far with good success I think I've scribbled,
And of twice seven lines have clear got o'er ten.
Courage! Another'll finish the first triplet.
Thanks to the Muse, my work begins to shorten.
There's thirteen lines got through driblet by driblet.
'Tis done! Count how you will, I warrant there's fourteen."

The halting metre and wretched rhymes of this liberal sonnet make us wonder whether the canons of the worthy Edwards's criticism were quite as good weapons as those our more modern critics fight with.

And here—although it is purely a digression—space must be found for another sonnet, a literary curiosity without parallel: for it is all in lines of but one word each—a sonnet, in short, of but fourteen words. It is by a modern Frenchman, M. J. de Rességuier, and here it is:

"Fort
Belle,
Elle
Dort.

"Frêle
Sort;
Quelle
Mort!

"Rose
Close;
La

"Brise
L'a
Prise."

To return to our sheep, here are some of Mr. Dobson's most lightsome and frolicsome lambkins. They are triolets, or little verses wherein the first line appears three times—whence the name—and the second line closes the stanza:

"ROSE-LEAVES.

"'*Sans peser—sans vesier.*'

"These are leaves of my rose,
Pink petals I treasure:
There is more than one knows
In these leaves of my rose;
Oh, the joys! oh, the woes!
They are quite beyond measure.
These are leaves of my rose—
Pink petals I treasure."

. . . .

"A KISS.

"Rose kissed me to-day.
Will she kiss me to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me to-day.
But the pleasure gives way
To a savor of sorrow—
Rose kissed me to-day;
Will she kiss me to-morrow?"

. . . . .

"URCEUS EXIT.

I intended an ode,
And it turned into triolets.
It began *à la mode*—
I intended an ode,
But Rose crossed the road
With a bunch of fresh violets;
I intended an ode,
And it turned into triolets."

Notice how skillfully the recurring words are sought to be varied in meaning: how a different color and tone is given to the same phrase, to the greater variety of the whole poem. Upon similar principles of recurring lines are founded the *villanelle* and the *rondel*—Mr. Dobson has as yet given us no *virelai*, a lack he will doubtless in time supply. Here is a *rondel*—not far distant in form from the *rondeau*, but neither as full nor as capable of containing thought:

"'TOO HARD IT IS TO SING!'

"Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times,
When only coin can ring,
And no one cares for rhymes!

"Alas for him who climbs
To Aganippe's spring:
Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times!

"His kindred clip his wing;
His feet the critic limes;
If fame her laurel bring
Old age his forehead rimes:
Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times!"

And here is the *villanelle*, somewhat longer, but differing only a little in its use of principles almost identical:

"'WHEN I SAW YOU LAST, ROSE!'

(VILLANELLE.)

"When I saw you last, Rose,
You were only so high—
How fast the time goes!

"Like a bud ere it blows,
You just peeped at the sky,
When I saw you last, Rose!

"Now your petals unclose,
Now your May-time is nigh—
How fast the time goes!

"You would prattle your woes,
All the wherefore and why,
When I saw you last, Rose!

"Now you leave me to prose,
And you seldom reply—
How fast the time goes!

"And a life—how it grows!
You were scarcely so shy,
When I saw you last, Rose!

"In your bosom it shows
There is a guest on the sly—
(How fast the time goes!)
"Is it Cupid? Who knows!
Yet you used not to sigh,
When I saw you last, Rose—
How fast the time goes!"

Again, akin to these in form, in the use of the "refrain," in the limitation of the rhyme, is the *ballade* — and of this Mr. Dobson's specimen is really a fine piece of verse-making: it contains a thought, wrought out well in the three obligatory stanzas, and brought out finally in the *envoi*. Here is the *ballade*:

"THE PRODIGALS

"Princes! and you most valorous
Nobles and barons of all degrees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us—
Beggars that come from the over-seas:
Nothing we ask or of gold or fees;
Harry us not with the hounds, we pray!
Lo! for the surcote's hem we seize—
Give us, ah! give us, but yesterday!

"Dames most delicate, amorous—
Damosels blithe as the belted bees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us—
Beggars that come from the over-seas:
Nothing we ask of the things that please;
Weary are we, and worn, and gray!
Lo! for we clutch and clasp your knees—
Give us, ah! give us, but yesterday!

"Damosels, dames, be piteous!
(But the dames rode fast by the roadway-trees.)
Hear us, O knights magnanimous!
(But the knights pricked on in their panoplies.)
Nothing they gat, or of hope or ease,
But only to beat on the breast and say,
'Life we drank to the dregs and lees'—
Give us, ah! give us, but yesterday!

"ENVOI.

"Youth, take heed to the prayer of these:
Many there be by the dusty way—
Many that cry to the rocks and seas,
'Give us, ah! give us, but yesterday!'"

The *chant-royal*, of which the first English specimen is given in Mr. Gosse's "Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* last July, is a sort of elongated *ballade*; it has five stanzas of eleven lines each, and an *envoi* of five lines, all ending with the refrain, and all running on the same limited choice of rhymes. Another specimen, by Mr. John Payne, will be found in Mr. Davenport Adam's new volume of "Latter-day Lyrics," which also contains a note by Mr. Dobson, describing all these French metres.

Not content with merely French forms of verse, the French poets have even adopted one Malayan form, the *pantoum*, first brought to their attention in the notes to Hugo's "Orientales," and afterward employed to advantage by Théophile Gautier and Théodore de Banville. It is not at first sight encouraging; it consists of a series of four-line stanzas, the second and fourth lines of each stanza reappearing as the first and third of the next stanza, and so on *ad infinitum*, the first and third lines of the first stanza appearing again in the final one. Mr. Dobson's *pantoum* is a little long, so only beginning and end are here given:

"IN TOWN.

"'*The blue-fly sung in the pane.*'—TENNYSON.

"June in the zenith is torrid
(There is that woman again!);
Here, with the sun on one's forehead,
Thought gets dry in the brain.

"There is that woman again:
'Strawberries! fourpence a pottle!'
Thought gets dry in the brain;
Ink gets dry in the bottle.

"'Strawberries! fourpence a pottle!'
Oh, for the green of a lane!
Ink gets dry in the bottle;
'Buzz' goes a fly in the pane!
. . . . . .

"Some muslin-clad Mabel or May
To dash one with eau de Cologne;
Bluebottle's off and away,
And why should I stay here alone?

"To dash one with eau de Cologne
All over one's talented forehead!
And why should I stay here alone?
June in the zenith is torrid!"

There is still another form of verse which deserves mention here, although Mr. Swinburne is possibly the only English writer who has attempted it. This is the "sestina," a series of six stanzas, each of six lines—generally hendecasyllabics—with an "envoi" of three lines. The same six words must end the lines of each stanza, being duly changed in their order, and three of these rhyming words appear again in the "envoi." This form was a great favorite with the Provençal troubadours, and it is also to be found slightly modified in the Italian. Here is Mr. Swinburne's "sestina," which seems, though it may perhaps be heresy to say so, to have much more sound than sense:

"I saw my soul rest upon a day
As a bird sleeping in the nest of night,
Among soft leaves that give the starlight way,
To touch its wings but not its eyes with light;
So that it knew as one in visions may,
And knew not as men waking of delight.

"This was the measure of my soul's delight;
It has no power of joy to fly by day,
Nor part in the large lordship of the light,
But in a secret, moon-beholden way
Had all its will of dreams and pleasant night,
And all the love and life that sleepers may.

"But such life's triumph as men waking may
It might not have to feed its faint delight
Between the stars by night and sun by day,
Shut up with green leaves and a little light;
Because its way was as a lost star's way,
A world's not wholly known of day or night.

"All loves, and dreams, and sounds, and gleams, of night
Made it all music that such minstrels may,
And all they had they gave it of delight;
But in the full face of the fire of day
What place shall be for any starry light,
What part of heaven in all the wide sun's way?

"Yet the soul woke not, sleeping by the way,
Watched as a nursling of the large-eyed night,
And sought no strength nor knowledge of the day,
Nor closer touch conclusive of delight,
Nor mightier joy, nor truer than dreamers may,
Nor more of song than they nor more of light.

"For who sleeps once and sees the secret light
Whereby sleep shows the soul a fair way
Between the rise and rest of day and night,
Shall care no more to fare as all men may,
But be his place of pain or of delight,
There shall he dwell, beholding night as day.

"Song, have thy day and take thy fill of light
Before the night be fallen across thy way;
Sing while he may, man hath no long delight."

THE SAALBURG RUINS.

HOMBURG is not an unfamiliar place to the majority of European travelers. Its name, to some, awakens only memories of ruined lives and wasted fortunes; its streets reëcho the shouts of frenzied gamblers; its homes are haunted by the spirits of ruined suicides; its history is a tragedy in which honor and honesty fill no *rôles!* Others think of Homburg as a lovely town sheltered under the far-projecting shadows of the Taunus Mountains, fanned in midsummer by the breezes through their valleys—its very soil perforated by tonic waters—a modern, home-like, thrifty German city. Its gardens and its lovely lakes; its Electoral Palace and its handsome Kurhaus; its shaded paths; its forests and its hills; its mountain-walks and drives—all these are unending in their varied beauty. Homburg may have lost in material prosperity by the enforced abolition of public gambling, but the little city wears most charmingly its new mantle of respectability.

I was sauntering leisurely through one of the side-streets in this now quiet city, in the summer of 1875—prying into household secrets; strolling into blind alleys, and seeing in my imagination tabards and armorial bearings in all unintelligible signs; trying to find something ancient, something mysterious, in every nook and cranny—when my attention was arrested by a little two-story, wooden house, in front of which was suspended a sign bearing in good English the inscription, "Curiosities from the Saalburg." Paying the usual entrance-fee, a portly guardian in military undress ushered me into a couple of rooms filled with all sorts of curious trophies, and in his guttural tongue conveyed the information that these odds and ends gathered together here were the results of an excavation made in the neighborhood—an excavation which had revealed the existence, centuries before, of an extensive Roman military post within four miles of the city of Homburg.

Here was an abundance of material for reflection, more especially when I found it to be a fact that, of the thousands of tourists who annually visit the

springs of Homburg, the great majority come and go without any knowledge of their proximity to these wonderful ruins, and, of those who do visit them, very few are at all acquainted with their history or what they really mark. Studying the old camp, and all that in any manner pertained to that earlier age and time, I collected the following facts:

On a wooded saddle of the Taunus Mountains, nearly fifteen hundred feet above the sea-level, are the ruins, or more properly, perhaps, the *remains*, of a once strongly-fortified Roman camp. There is little doubt that these ruins mark the site of a *castrum* of great size and importance, and forming a part of that wonderful line of fortifications (*limes Imperii Romani*) built by the Roman legions as a protection against the fierce and warlike Germanic tribes. Gibbon says that the legions were encamped along the frontiers of the barbarians, and that in the time of Hadrian there were two legions in Lower and three in Upper Germany. These posts or camps were not only strongly fortified, but were also miniature cities in which each art had an artist-representative, and each craft a skilled workman, and in which the amenities and courtesies of social life were by no means neglected.

The time of the first building of the Saalburg is as yet mere matter of conjecture, but the strategic importance of the place, as well as its admirable location, has warranted others in believing that this was a fortress built originally by Drusus, and destroyed A. D. 9, after the defeat of Varus. According to Tacitus, it was rebuilt by Germanicus, A. D. 15, and it is by some identified as the Arctaunus of Ptolemy—a supposition rendered still more probable by the adaptability of the name to the location. The old fort was the scene of many a conflict, and often destroyed by the victorious Germans, but it was soon rebuilt by the Romans, who appreciated full well the strategic importance of the post as the key to the territories of the two nations. And, according to Viollet-le-Duc, each rebuilding added to its defensive strength. Crumbled fragments of walls; the almost obliterated outlines of moat and rampart, and irregular piles of stones scattered here and there within the inclosure to-day, mark the site of this great Roman fortress where the armies of the emperors of the civilized world so often met their barbarian foes, and fought for territory no sooner won than lost, but to be conquered again. In these scattered, buried stones, the antiquarian sees gates and towers, barracks and stables, baths and tombs; here he marks the pretorian headquarters, and close by the humbler home of the centurion. Farther on, his practised eye traces the former dwellings of veterans, citizens, and camp-followers, and from beneath the earth he brings to light the boundaries of a town with all its shops, its streets, its homes, and its graves.

For centuries the historian asserts that wars of extermination and of conquest were waged here between the Germans and their oppressors with only short intervals of actual peace. A town sprang into existence about the central camp, and, as the place increased in strength, it became less and less an object of attack through its augmenting powers of resistance. Security brought with it prosperity, so that when most prosperous, it was too strong to be a necessity, and its success having destroyed its *raison d'être*, the garrison was withdrawn, and ultimately the civil settlement was also abandoned.

Fourteen centuries came and went, during which time the old *castrum* sank deeper and deeper beneath the covering of age, and decayed away upon that mountain-height, entombed and unknown. Rome fell by degrees from her proud position as mistress of and dictator to the civilized world, and internal corruption destroyed her empire. Her anti-barbarian fortifications became grazing-grounds whereon were fed the herds of neighboring and powerful states created by the lessons taught by her own civilization. The lines that marked her boundary-limits became more and more contracted; her barbarian tribal foes became coequal nations; the Roman eagles retreated, and the legionaries became *conservators*, instead of conquerors.

In the year 1720 a stone in the large white tower of the Electoral Castle at Homburg attracted the attention of some passer-by, who noticed the fragmentary Latin inscription on its surface, which, on examination, proved that it had been used as a Roman "votive-stone" many centuries before the existence of either Homburg or its castle. After considerable trouble and research it was ascertained that this particular stone, with many of its companions, had been brought to its present resting-place from the Saalburg, the fact that the stones were already cut and dressed being suggestive of a saving of labor rather than of inquiry as to its origin. This discovery gave the first impulse to antiquarian industry, and a number of interesting objects rewarded the labors of the explorer. Cinerary urns in perfect condition, lamps, arms, coins in great abundance, were uncovered, and in great part carried away until lack of means, wars, and other causes, combined to stop further explorations. In 1817 some laborers employed by the government in the construction of a high-road to Usingen came across an urn containing over five hundred Roman coins of the first and second centuries after Christ; but, strangely enough, this important discovery added no new life to the abandoned work of exploration, which still slumbered until about 1860, when a regular system of excavation was undertaken either by the government or under its auspices, and has been quietly and slowly prosecuted up to the present time. From the results of these labors—although but a very small portion of the ground has been uncovered—we are enabled to form a pretty accurate idea of the appearance of and the doings in this old Roman outpost and settlement.

I have said before that the fortress on the Saalburg formed an important link in the Roman system of extensive intrenched lines along the boundaries of the conquests of its eagles. The large civil settlement annexed to it seems to have been created partly as a necessity, but in greater part as a consequence of the imperial policy of giving to each vet-

eran who had been twenty years in his country's service his choice between a money-gift of three thousand denarii (five hundred dollars) or its equivalent in land. The veteran soldier who had spent the best part of his life in the camp, wishing still, like an old war-horse, to participate in military exercises, to be near the scenes of former illustrious exploits; to retain the companionship of former comrades; to listen at will to the sounds of martial music and the crash of arms, or, as a mentor, to superintend and watch the lessons, and to offer an example of martial discipline to the young recruits — would naturally choose for his homestead the neighborhood of these fortified posts. Thus a corps of veterans with their families formed a civil settlement, and more than doubled the effective force of the garrison. The social life and civilization of their Roman conquerors were thus ever present before the barbarian, and, if he learned only too well the penalty of war, so might he also see the privileges of peace. And this peace was preserved by a constant readiness for war.

Gibbon says that Hadrian and the two Antonines "by every honorable means invited the friendship of the barbarians," and that during forty-three years, "with the exception of a few hostilities that served to exercise the legions on the frontier," their reigns were noted for universal peace. So marked and so great was their influence that the fiercest of the Germanic chieftains frequently submitted their differences to their arbitration. As several inscriptions to these rulers are found carved on stones in different parts of the camp and the town, we may infer that during their reigns was the period of the Saalburg's greatest prosperity.

The citadel or castle proper formed a rectangle rounded at the corners, and surrounded by a deep double ditch or moat. Four gates with flanking towers constituted the entrances through the walls, the latter being between five and six feet in thickness. As was customary in other camps, we will suppose that the northern gate was called the Pretorian, the southern the Porta Decumana, the eastern and western respectively Porta Principalis Dextra and Porta Principalis Sinistra. Within these gates were the tents of the tribunes, of the *præfecti sociorum*, of the centurions—the streets, some fifty, some one hundred, feet in width—the barracks of the legions, of the volunteers, and of the allies, horse and foot, while in a line with the Pretorian gate was the pretorium, or general's headquarters. Of the uncovered ruins on the Saalburg the pretorium attracts particular attention. It must have been about one hundred and fifty-three feet long and one hundred and thirty-two feet wide, with five entrances and an inner court forty feet square, around which was a portico, the foundations and sandstone bases of the columns being easily traced. To the left of the main entrance we find the foundations of a small building in which were kept the standards and the golden eagles (called by Tacitus *Bellorum Deos*), reverenced by the soldier next to his gods, and which imparted to the building in which they were kept the sanctity and dignity of a chapel. In front of this the pedestal and the scattered fragments mark where once stood a grand bronze statue. A natural astonishment at finding in this remote outpost so great a specimen of the sculptor's chisel is easily explained when we remember that the legions, even when recruited in the most distant provinces, were supposed to consist of Roman citizens, and a true Roman never forgot that Rome was the home of art, and that, wherever he was, there Rome in her majesty, her power, and her arts, should be represented also.

Many deep wells were found in the fort walled in, and the stones well worn, evidently by use. The furnaces for heating during the cold winter months were peculiarly constructed, and in fact all the arrangements for keeping the barracks and officers' quarters warmed were particularly noticeable. Not only were the buildings warmed by earthen pipes in the walls, but in a considerable number of the dwellings in the adjoining civil settlement the floors were also heated.

On many of the stones found in the camp are marks indicating the companies and legions constituting the garrison at different times, as the eighth and twelfth, and the second cohort of the fourth legion.

In the civil settlement many tombs have been found, and also the place where the bodies of the dead were burned. Dr. Hefner says: "I must confess that, with the exception of the street of the tombs in Pompeii, no relics of antiquity made such a deep impression upon me as these remains, compressed into a few square feet, of the warriors of the all-conquering Roman Empire." These, containing the ashes of the dead, and the lamps and trinkets buried with them, have been placed in a stone house built for their reception near the site of the ancient burying-ground.

On the west side of the Porta Decumana a group of nine small buildings has recently been unearthed, which were evidently used as bathing-rooms. Among other relics found at the Saalburg were inscriptions of the time of Antoninus Pius and Septimius Severus; a stone altar dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus, and another to Fortune, with fragments of a colossal statue of Genius. An innumerable quantity of small gems, rings, bracelets, and portions of armor, have also rewarded the labors of the patient workers.

Standing among these suggestive ruins, many interesting facts pertaining to the military life and customs of the Romans, gleamed from different sources, are easily recalled, and we go back in the roll of centuries to restore the forgotten or faded picture of camp-life and duties more than a thousand years ago.

Honor and religion were the two great controlling incentives that influenced and guided the legions. The oath of service and fidelity was annually renewed. The soldier solemnly promised never to desert his standard, to submit his own will absolutely to the commands of his leaders, and to sacrifice his life freely for the emperor and the empire. On entering into camp all took an additional oath—"that they would steal nothing from the camp, and would

bring whatever they might find to the tribunes." Cowardice or lack of discipline was visited with severe punishments. It was a maxim in the Roman army that a good soldier should dread his officers far more than the enemy. According to Varro, the name of the army was borrowed from the word *exercitus*, signifying "exercise;" and hence, in camp or field, in peace and in war, military exercises were constant. There was a morning and evening drill, from which even the veterans were not excused. The arms used in their exercises were double the weight of those used in real war. "The soldiers marched, ran, leaped, swam, carried heavy burdens, handled all kinds of arms, and moved to the sound of flutes in the Pyrrhic dance."

The camp on the Saalburg corresponds in its general features to the descriptions of Polybius, having four gates surrounded by a *fossa*, with a rampart or *vallum* of earth; but, being a *stativa*, or stationary camp, it had more buildings than a mere winter intrenchment. Here we see the stony outlines of the *forum*, or quartermaster's; of the *quæstorium*, or commissariat; of the *valetudinarium*, or hospital; of the *veterinarium*, or farriery; of the *tabulinum*, or record-office; and of the bath-houses, so dear to the Roman heart. Then, near the centre of the now silent camp, was the pretorium, with its standard-house, and the *augurale*, wherein the mighty pretor consulted the augurs, and before which stood the altars of the gods and the images of the emperors. Here the *circuitor*, or night-watchman, was stoned to death if he failed in his duty; here, at daybreak, came the tribunes, bringing in reports from their subordinates; here, at sunset, the watchword for the night, marked on a four-cornered piece of wood, called a *tessera*, was given to the centurions. And at the four gates the stalwart sentry ceaselessly walked his narrow beat, ready at any moment, grimly and stoically, to meet his certain death, without for an instant deserting his post, as did the hero in the sentry-box at the gate of Herculaneum, in Pompeii, for in his person he represented the dignity and the invincible power of the great Roman Empire.

In the adjoining civil settlement the customs were not so different from our own.

The Roman family consisted of the women, the children, the slaves, and the clients. The shops (*tabernæ*) were erected against the houses, but their system and number were much more limited than ours, and most of the business was carried on by middle-men. Mommsen considers that their shop system did not admit of the supplying of every possible article of necessity or of luxury, and for this reason there arose innumerable occasions where private persons desired to dispose of this or that article—a surplus of agricultural products, old carts, ploughs, or even old and invalid slaves—following Cato's advice to the land-owner. Hence the importance of the middle-man, whom we may imagine bustling around in the Saalburg settlement, with his tablets ready and his *stylus* nicely pointed, offering to supply any want, to gratify the most fastidious taste, to furnish a cup by Phidias or a lizard by Mentor to the collector of curiosities, or articles of more direct practical value to the housekeeper, and all for his paltry two per cent. commission.

Augustus had established a kind of regular postal communication between the fortified outposts and the capital; and we may imagine the greeting given to the Saalburg courier on his arrival after his long journey, freighted with the latest gossip from Rome. The jar of antique coins—alluded to before as having been the cause of a renewal of the interest in the excavations—was undoubtedly part of the hoard in some miser's *arca* or *armarium*, and which had probably been overlooked in the abandonment of the post.

And so we might go on with our reflections on this fascinating period at a greater length than the limits of a magazine article will permit as we recall the facts brought to mind by the sight of these long-forgotten walls. Once again is mighty Rome before us, with her Briarean arms grasping at the control of all the known world. Her wonderful civilization extended into the deserts and the strongholds of her barbaric foes, symbolizing both her strength and her swift-acting retributive power. On the Saalburg we found a fort and a city—Rome militant, aggressive, and Rome the home of art, of culture, of all that ennobles men, and, spurring them to deeds of valor, makes them truly great.

FRENCH WRITERS AND ARTISTS.

I.

ERNEST D'HERVILLY.

THIS writer is designated in France a *fantaisiste*, for which the English equivalent seems to be "humorist." The quality implied by either word is, perhaps, too subtile and evanescent to admit of nearer definition than the words themselves. If we take it to be the power of transmuting into flashes of wit and drollery those subtile valuations of men and things which constitute the essence of good writing of every kind, nearly all the greatest writers have been humorists; and this humor, not the least enviable of the attributes of genius, may fairly be ascribed to D'Hervilly.

His humor is of the broadest. It flows in every fold of his many-colored literary mantle, which is itself made up in parts of the oddest shreds and patches, though everywhere bordered with the spangles of fun.

He has written poems, newspaper articles innu-

merable, and literary pamphlets; he has tried his strength in books, in plays, in reviews, and in every way and everywhere the epithet *fantaisiste* has clung to his name, not to diminish, but to heighten, the splendor of it.

Before going further, let us try to give a sketch of the man. He is tall and thin, well formed, and with a very intelligent eye lighting up a countenance on which meditation has left its traces. The sardonic expression of his mouth is partly concealed by a large beard that descends upon his chest, after the fashion of the ancient Gauls, from whom he traces his descent.

Ernest D'Hervilly was born in Paris in 1839. He studied at the Lycée de Versailles; and, before becoming an author, was a draughtsman to the Chemin de Fer du Nord and in the municipal service of Paris.

His literary career dates from 1860. In these seventeen years how much ground has he passed over! We find the impress of his humoristic genius in seventy-four Parisian journals, and we cannot be sure that these are all.

D'Hervilly prides himself more on his republican politics than on his writings; but, despite all his efforts in the press militant to become a political celebrity, he has remained, and will probably remain, essentially a man of letters—a result not at all to be regretted in the interests of literature.

His marked inclination to political strife is shown in his earliest writings, which appeared in those small publications, all teeth and claws, originated for the most part in the Quartier des Ecoles, and which, by their pugnacity, bitterness, and wit, caused so much uneasiness to the Empire.

Among the wicked young scribes of those days, many have lived to see the error of their ways. Who would imagine that Paul de Cassagnac, the now fire-eating champion of the imperial *régime*, was in the first rank of that rebellious phalanx? "*Quantum mutatus ab illo!*" is the cry of both sides.

After writing for some time in the *Diogène*, D'Hervilly, at the invitation of Commerson, engaged himself on the *Tintamarre*, his contributions to which soon became popular.

The *Figaro*—we speak of the literary *Figaro* of old times, which numbered among its editors the ablest men of all parties—next employed his pen; and, when the proprietors of the *Figaro* founded the *Grand Journal*—a remarkable undertaking, as its size exceeded that of the largest of our American newspapers—they reserved a place on its staff for the young D'Hervilly.

Notwithstanding the brilliant array of literary talent which seemed to insure for the *Grand Journal* an unprecedented success, it proved a failure. The enormous size of its sheet and the awkwardness of its form repelled the Parisian public, and the undertaking was finally abandoned.

The literary staff of the *Grand Journal*, unique in its universality, and which had been got together with infinite pains, was now scattered to the four winds. D'Hervilly found a refuge in the *Artiste* of Arsène Houssaye, and in the *Boulevard* of Carjat, upon which he worked with characteristic energy. It was in the latter of these publications that he may be said to have given the full measure of that humor so truly Parisian which constitutes the basis of his talent.

We cannot follow him through the long series of journals into which he has made innumerable and always felicitous excursions. It will be sufficient to mention particularly one of these, for the prosperity of which his very numerous contributions were only too felicitous.

No satirical paper under the Empire was more pungent in its criticism of the administration, more implacable in its hostility to the existing order of things generally, than *La Lune*. It carried on its incessant warfare both with pen and pencil. Whatever the crayon of André Gil could portray for the ridicule or the hatred of the masses—and how abundant was the material for scandal afforded by the Government!—was enhanced a hundred-fold by the elastic sneer, the ambiguous argument, the quasi-harmless raillery, the honey-sweet poison commended to the lips of the arch-enemy—in a word, by the inexhaustible wit and audacity which characterized every paragraph of the letter-press.

It was not to be expected that this could go on indefinitely. That it was tolerated for ever so short a time by a government so jealous of its prestige, may seem wonderful; but, when the enemy is the press, there will always be an *embarras du choix* where to strike first. At length, however, the cloud-compelling powers of "order" collected all their thunders, and the lightning of their fines, and, when the storm had passed, *La Lune* existed only as *L'Eclipse!* Subsequently it assumed the title of *La Lune Rousse*, and between this paper and the *Rappel* D'Hervilly now seems by preference to divide his contributions.

We cannot, as we have said, mark out his devious course in the regions of journalistic literature, but the following publications, for which he has written more or less, may be incidentally mentioned: *La Nouvelle Némésis; Les Nouvelles; Le Mousquetaire d'Alexandre Dumas; Paris Cascade*, which was published by Léon Rossignol, a poor *littérateur* entirely forgotten now; *La Rue*, the creation of the audacious Jules Vales, afterward the apostle of the communistic *régime; L'Eclair; Paris-Journal; La Vie Parisienne; Paris-Caprice; L'Art Libre; Le XIXme Siècle; La Renaissance; La République des Lettres; L'Illustration*. In all these, not to speak further of his large share of work in *La Lune* and *L'Eclipse*, everywhere we find the same raciness and breadth of humor, untiring spirit, and prodigality of means.

With all this journalistic and review work, D'Hervilly has found time to write books. He seems desirous to illustrate by example the paradox that, the more one writes, the more one can write; he who sits idle, waiting for inspiration, "*rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis.*"

There may be some truth in this as regards prose, yet even in prose the experiment is dangerous, the

example pernicious. In all the miles of print annually traveled over by the reading public, how seldom, comparatively, do we find a word exactly suited to its place, or a line that does not inevitably suggest the following one! The *principium et fons* of all good writing is knowledge derived from observation and reflection. Observation implies opportunity, reflection requires time, and the knowledge that is the offspring of both rarely comes into the world without sharp pangs of labor. Between the well-spring and the clear literary flow there must be at any given moment a definite though unknown proportion. The *dictum* of Edgar A. Poe that a man of genius can never write himself out is one of the empty boasts in which men of genius occasionally indulge. Happily, the "fatal facility" that makes writers of us all—*scribimus indocti doctique*—has its counter-stroke in oblivion. It is still easier to forget than to write.

To D'Hervilly it would appear to be quite indifferent whether prose or verse is to fill up the spare hour. After an amusing *fantaisie*, entitled "La Lanterne en Vers de Couleurs," he published "Jeph Offayard" and "Le Harem." The last of these three volumes had, as a second title, "Sérail Ethnographique."

D'Hervilly prides himself especially on being a great ethnographist; and it would seem that "Ethnography," like most other peculiarities literary or artistic for which a name can be found, *fait école*. As a refinement of modern criticism the term ethnographic is convenient, though it seems to mean little more than local coloring; if used to designate a school of writers, with what limitation must it be understood? Who are the writers—those of ledgers and almanacs being excepted—that are to be considered out of the pale?

All mannerism tends to affectation. "It is dangerous," says Taine, "for a poet to know too well the rules of his art." It is, perhaps, dangerous for a humorist to know too accurately to what school he belongs. Nature is better than art, even though that art should be ethnographic. However this may be, ethnography is the very badge of the literary order, the device on the scutcheon, the mystical masonic sign by which D'Hervilly would choose to be recognized among writers. We know that he is a republican in politics, a follower of Victor Hugo and Dickens in literature generally, a disciple of Darwin in science, and we take his word for the fact that he is an ethnographist.

We have not space for an analysis of his poems, and the task might be an ungrateful one. The best poetry is not always that of which the most telling account can be rendered, and quotation of detached verses as samples, if not *proverbially* dangerous, ought to be so.

As to his publications in prose, it might almost be a sufficient guarantee for their value that they were issued by the house of Charpentier. We have, in succession, "Contes pour les Grandes Personnes;" "Mesdames les Parisiennes," one of the most successful of all his compositions; "Histoires Divertissantes," "Les D'Hervilly Caprices." The last of these was a selection from his most successful articles, published by the *Presse Elégante*.

In the drama, D'Hervilly has been almost invariably successful. Nearly all his pieces are in verse—a mode of dramatic composition which seems only to add to an author's chances of failure. His first play was a comedy in one act, entitled "Le Malade Réel." As youthful genius seldom condescends to begin with anything less than a five-act tragedy, we commend this example for imitation. Then came "Le Docteur Sanspareil," followed by "La Belle Sainora," which met with a well-deserved success; and afterward the clever "Bibelot," which was so great a favorite of the Palais Royal; and finally "Le Bonhomme Misère," which may be said to have set the seal on his dramatic fame.

But his exuberant invention could not always wait for the representation of his plays. Under the general title of "Théâtre de Campagne," he has published a series of dramatic pieces: "La Soupière," "Silence dans les Rangs," "Vent d'Ouest," "Les Revanches de l'Escalier," "De Calais à Douvres," and "Entre la Loupe et les Lèvres." Indefatigable in work, he is said to have as many more pieces ready for publication or representation.

In these days, a really original author who writes for the stage would seem to court disappointment, to become a candidate for disgust. The manager's venture is too large to allow of his incurring any risk that can be eliminated; but in imaginative literature all is a risk out of the dead level of mediocrity. The public alone can be sponsor for the strange-looking children of genius; and, from "The Beggar's Opera" to the latest dramatic success, managers have trembled for whatever has "brought down the house." Original genius, like other explosives, passes by the "line of least resistance," and the decline of the drama must keep pace with the increasing facilities for publication. In England, the drama has long been "quietly inurned" in French translations. In France, it maintains a still brilliant but precarious existence. The same causes must be followed by the same effect.

In conclusion, we will give the pseudonyms under which this indefatigable writer is best known—in the *Rappel*, "Le Passant;" in *La Lune*, "Cousin Jacques;" in the *Eclipse*, "Bleu-blanc-rouge;" in the *Paris-Caprice*, "Moi;" in the *Tintamarre*, "Chaudine Duclos;" in the *Diogène*, "L'Homme aux Grands Souliers." There are many others, perhaps as many as the publications to which he has contributed.

Which of our writers could afford thus to eclipse himself, to throw overboard at each new undertaking the prestige of a well-known name? But perhaps they manage these things differently in France.

SOCRATES: A REMINISCENCE.

SOCRATES came to me one balmy morning in June. Perhaps it would be better to say that I came to him. James, my tall, wiry, mulatto servant, disappeared one evening without leave, and returned next morning with the information that "*he* was down below with them calvary fellers." James had the practice of absenting himself overnight, and reappearing in the early dawn laden with fowls and vegetables as a peace-offering. I never knew where he obtained them, nor how he got through the lines; but I accepted his apology all the same. And this morning, when he appeared late, without any visible excuse, he answered my look of indignant surprise by a suggestive jerk of his head in the direction of the cavalry-camp, and his cabalistic statement. It was evident "he" referred to his apology; so I took James and went "down below." Not that I believed "he" had any actual existence; but it would never do to permit a servant to go off without leave and return without excuse: there were rumors of scurvy about the camp.

When we arrived at the picket-rope James pointed to a diminutive mule, and remarked, "There he is." There were two cavalry-men engaged in securing the animal to the rope; but the assured expression of ownership with which I at once gave him in charge of James must have convinced them of wrong-doing, for they walked hesitatingly away. On our way back I learned that my servant had intended bringing in fowls, but, as daylight had already appeared, he had contented himself with a mule. It was as if he had gone fishing for trout, and, not finding any, had put up with a gar rather than return with his basket empty. At least, such was the tone of disappointment he expressed.

But, as he frequently assured me the animal "never had no marster," when a few days later a man appeared in camp looking for a lost mule, it was thought unnecessary to ask him to wait—James being absent at the time, watering our prize. I liked to believe James, and made a point of doing so whenever I could. He seemed to work better when conscious of being relied upon, and I felt a delicacy in thus suggesting a doubt of his word. Nevertheless, the feeling of ownership deepened within me after that, and I came to take more interest in my property. We secured him in a narrow alley behind the tent, where we could exercise a personal supervision over him. Moreover, the fact of his being there was tantamount to a sign in large capitals of "No Thoroughfare," for no one who went through the alley once ever returned the same way.

For some days after taking up his abode with us the mule seemed to give himself up to a process of retrospection. It was as if he had said: "I am now leaving the old life, and entering upon the untried realities of the new. Let us see what there was in the past that may be safely cast aside in the future. The past! what is it?—a wraith of 'creeds outworn,' and worm-eaten philosophies fated to pale and fade before the burning sunrise of my new life!" It is possible, however, that his seeming retrospection may have been only the effort of an undeveloped intellect to travel out of the present; for there is a period in the history of every individual when the mind comes to the end of its tether. Its stock of experience has become stale, and a new assortment is necessary. The strongest, healthiest natures will strike their tents in the present, and journey into the land of the future. But for the ordinary nature the task is too great, the toil is too severe. To avoid stagnation in the present, they invert their gaze. The past is pleasant to look upon; it lies bathed in the purple-golden haze of sunset, with its harsh features veiled, and its crude tints softened, and thither the dissatisfied spirits bend their steps.

However this may be, he stood for days in the alley with his head thrown a little forward of the perpendicular, as is usual with beings whose frontal brain is active, and apparently lost in reverie. Sometimes, indeed, he increased the pleased engagedness of his expression by carrying a single straw in his mouth, indicative of his love of Nature and a taste for botany. Yet no eye ever caught him weary, listless, or vacant, or indulging in any remission of his engagement to keep the alley closed against passers. He always presented the aspect of being fully employed and equally intent, even in his periods of abstraction, and the spring within him was always strong enough for work. Indeed, every faculty seemed hung on coiled springs, answering with electric quickness to its proper excitant.

It was during these first days that an artillery friend of mine, who had been a professor of classical literature in private life, paid us a visit, and was, of course, introduced to the new-comer. I think it was his tendency to reproduce the past (he had named each gun of his own battery after some great gun of history), naturally arising from an excessive love of it, that led him to strongly recommend Socrates as a name for the stranger. It happened that the mule was in a state of mental abstraction at the time of his visit, and so gave my friend an opportunity to urge his claim by a quotation. "Alcibiades," said he, "relates of Socrates that he once stood a whole day and night, until the breaking of the second morning, with a fixed gaze, engrossed in the consideration of a weighty subject; and this," he continues, "Socrates is ever wont to do when his mind is occupied with inquiries in which there are difficulties to be overcome."

Supported by such illustrious authority, I could do nothing less than yield. It is true I rather inclined to the name of Mohammed, because, like the Prophet, his iron earnestness and robust confidence asserted itself everywhere; but, after all, his life was, perhaps, about equally balanced between philosophical meditation and restless activity. There

was, too, no doubt that, like his great prototype, he could be heroic upon occasion. Under the name of Socrates, then, let me introduce him to the reader.

Imagine a mule scarce ten hands high, with some depth of chest and breadth of shoulders added to make his courage and confidence surer; his color a bright sorrel, and his coat sleek and glossy, as if with an instinct that it was concerned in expressing him; his ears large, with a liberal breadth of brim, and slightly turned up behind, as they retreated and advanced with every change of feeling; his limbs and hoofs varying the effect of personal beauty by their more delicate elegance; and his fine, large head alive with an expression of keenest intelligence. He did not parade his person; it was as much as his person could do to match his mien and movement. Moreover, it is the temperament of such an animal, more than anything else, that determines his character. And Socrates was centric, positive, and absolute.

I think it was the region of country in which his lot was cast that accounted in a measure for his diminutive stature. Development requires conditions; and a niggardly soil and severe climate are unfavorable to any great physical or mental growth. The scene of his life was laid in a rugged locality, where the inhabitants, like their forest-trees, attain a medium growth, and generally stay there. To this fact, doubtless, was owing Socrates's physical limitation. And yet, when one became thoroughly acquainted with him, his stature ceased to be noticed. There was so much that was large about him in other ways that his physical defect only offered a pleasing contrast. Besides, like other small creatures, he believed earnestly in himself, and so made drafts upon the admiration of others. He was a singularly odd animal, indeed, though not a whit made up or affected, and without an iota of pretense about him.

I have spoken of his habit of indulging in reverie. This was more especially noticeable during the day, because then, with the exception of an occasional saunter in my company, he rarely had anything to do. He never even ate anything from daybreak till dark. There had been some discussion between James and myself regarding subsistence for him when he first came, and that mercurial servitor had voluntarily undertaken to arrange it. There being a cavalry-camp near us, he had succeeded in doing so; but he never fed Socrates by daylight. (This, however, is by the way).

Socrates's periods of reverie, though sufficiently frequent, never attained that habitual and incurable condition which so pitiably unfits the mind for all high purposes of knowledge and reflection. He manifested no intellectual feebleness, and could judge correctly on any matter to which he could be induced to attend. That singular indifference to outer sights and sounds, and insensibility to inconvenience and pain, so often the heritage of the chronic dreamer, had no hold upon him. Though he would stand for long hours gazing intently at a particular board in the end-gate of the wagon to which he was tied, yet he was all alive; every moment had its purpose, and every action its determinate drift. It sometimes happened, nevertheless, that some venturesome soldier, with more temerity than knowledge of Socratic character, would endeavor to take advantage of his dream-like condition to furtively encroach upon his territory. But, being just what his own organization made him, Socrates invariably kicked the intruder into space. And, though for the moment apparently indignant that any one should presume to confound his leisure with idleness, he quickly regained his usual serenity. For his temper, though sharp and high, was steady, and as it never fell into feebleness, so it never rose into rage; his pronounced individuality kept it too well balanced for that.

Perhaps Socrates's most prominent characteristic was the grim determination with which he adhered to any line of policy once taken. It was something more than firmness. He was so ascertained, so clearly inevitable, that nothing seemed capable of changing him. If he had been set going by machinery at his birth, to run for his entire lifetime, he could not have been less affected by external circumstances or accidental influences. When he first came to us he permitted me to mount him without difficulty; but, after further consideration of the matter, he came to regard such easy compliance as an amiable weakness, tending to detract from that respect which was his due. Accordingly, he always threw me without a word of warning, and James had to break him afresh every time I mounted him; though after that he ambled along willingly enough. He simply wanted his own way—a want which, I have observed, is not confined to his class. It was a weakness, if you will, but certainly a pardonable one. And I do not present Socrates as a model.

I recall another instance of his fixity of purpose, which, at the risk of rendering him ludicrous (which he was not), I beg to present. It was at the first of a series of celebrated battles. The enemy had appeared in force some two miles below our camp, and was shelling us with field-guns. Our own batteries were replying vigorously. As the battle for some time was simply an artillery-duel, and my own regiment was not called out, I mounted Socrates and rode down by the earthworks to witness the engagement. Taking a stand behind a large oak-tree, which effectually concealed both rider and animal from view, I peered cautiously out. So engrossed did I become by the rapid movements of the enemy's troops as to be utterly oblivious to the fact that the shells had begun to pass obliquely over my position, and fall among the camps at the rear. The passage of a huge shell in immediate proximity to my head, however, and its consequent explosion but a few rods behind me, called my attention to the fact. It aroused Socrates from his reverie also. He at once decided upon a plan of action, and with characteristic promptitude proceeded to put it into execution. It mattered not to him that the carrying out of that plan involved the complete surrender of my own will to his. He could not see anything from behind

the oak-tree, and did not intend to jeopardize his life by remaining in an exposed position, with no opportunity of retaliation. So he turned and incontinently fled. I have always thought that, if the enemy had been within kicking-distance, Socrates would have died in his tracks rather than move a hair's-breadth—at least, such was his habit in other instances; but he could not stand fire at long range.

It was in vain that I urged upon him my desire to retreat in a dignified manner—to gently amble away, as if we had tired of the scene, and were going home to rest; the only answer was a lowering of his head, and a more determined plunge than ever. Equally vain was the suggestion that a brigade of cavalry, backed by an entire division of infantry, were drawn up in line between us and the camp, and that, unless he deviated from the air-line he was pursuing, we would inevitably derange their organization; he paid no more attention to me than if I had been suggesting some change in the "Lost Tales of Miletus." Straight forward he went, like an arrow shot from a crossbow, his head down and his heels flying. It was a worse than Balaklavian charge—Socrates and I against six thousand.

I caught a momentary glimpse of the confused, scared faces directly before us, and the eager, laughing ones farther down the line; then a sudden opening, a wild cheer, a rude scraping against saddles and stirrups, and the dark-blue infantry-line alone remained to be passed. Socrates went at it with a rush. There was a momentary hesitation in the line, a supreme quiet, an eager scurry to the right and left, and we were in the midst of the platoons. Without a moment's hesitation, Socrates continued to work his way through. With a superb indifference to the prerogatives of rank, and a sublime disregard of the army regulations, he broke the forearm of a colonel with the same air of nonchalance as he disabled a private soldier. No human force could withstand his positiveness and power, and so he "burnt his bigness" through the line.

As we emerged from the rear of the division, and gained the privacy of the alley, amid shouts from thousands of throats of that absurd but pertinent slang, "Here's your mule!" I registered a solemn vow to dye my charger sky-blue, and exchange into the navy. But Socrates, I regret to say, did not share my humiliation. He seemed lost to all sense of shame. Indeed, he regarded me as if rather expecting congratulation than otherwise; and the look of indignation which he encountered only served to harden him. He seemed to say: "There's no use getting mad about it. I'm willing to go round with you, but I won't stand any foolishness, you know."

When Socrates had become somewhat inured to army-life, it was thought best to give him the freedom of the camp. This may have been a precautionary measure on James's part (the cavalry had moved away, and Socrates was bereft of means of support), or may have arisen from the impossibility of keeping him tied. However it was, he had, apparently, the full consent of every one to graze at his own sweet will. No one, in fact, seemed inclined to dispute his perfect freedom; and I have seen a scarred and veteran division commander surrender a shady grass-plot at the approach of Socrates, as if it had been his by divine right. Indeed, there always appeared to be plenty of room wherever he wanted to go. I never knew any one to dispute his possession save once—an instance visited by such summary and terrible retaliation that it was never repeated.

Socrates had wandered in a desultory way into the tent of the regimental adjutant, and, finding the cook absent and the table spread, had proceeded quietly to dispose of the bread laid in tempting slices upon it. I regret to say that, instead of enjoying the ready inspiration of the animal, the cook, upon his return, attempted to eject him by the use of a bayonet, a rash proceeding which Socrates, with his quick native sense and readiness, resented by promptly kicking the table, and, indeed, the entire contents of the establishment, into miniature fragments, never stopping until the tent came down over his head. It was of such a mixture of centric force and indomitable self-reliance that Socrates was made—a combination more attractive than many full-panoplied excellences.

In the course of his wanderings about camp, he came to develop a considerable religious sentiment—under modification, of course, of his peculiar mental constitution. He was naturally incapable of meekness, and anything like repentance seemed foreign to his nature. Still, he observed the outward forms of religion with a regularity and seeming devoutness that put to shame many others of us who made greater pretensions. The chaplain of my own regiment was a devout Presbyterian, and Socrates became for a time a regular attendant upon his ministrations, always taking his stand a short distance at one side of the speaker, and never so much as nibbling a mouthful of grass during the service. After a time, however, his convictions seemed to undergo a change—the austerity of so puritanic a doctrine became repugnant to his own large liberty of soul, and he experienced yearnings after a salvation demanding less of personal sacrifice. So he became an attendant upon the services of a neighboring Irish regiment, where the music and scenic effects seemed to produce a deep impression upon him.

In common with other eminently practical beings, the love of Nature in Socrates was but feebly developed. I speak, of course, of Nature in the abstract. It was only in his surroundings of men and things that there was the happiest possible fitness of relations. Yet he had a taste for botany in a mildly amateur way, which betrayed the inherent love of the beautiful within him. He would go rods out of his way to examine some rare flower or strange shrub, and, when he had eaten it, would stand gazing at the abbreviated stock with an expression of regret in his face, as if he expected a spectrum of the flower to rise mysteriously before him, or was sorry there was not more of it. It frequently happened, too, that when galloping along like a whirlwind his attention would be suddenly attracted by the deep-green of an

isolated grass-blade, or the superb party-colors of a thistle-bloom, which he might never see again, and he would instantaneously stop. The fact that his rider generally went on never seemed to trouble him. He patiently awaited the time when he chose to pick himself up and return.

As I do not present Socrates as the ideal of virtuous mulehood, I may frankly state that, if in his career virtues abounded, so did also vices of a negative sort. It was noticed with silent sorrow that he betrayed no growing affection for either James or myself. In fact, he appeared as willing to kick either of us as he was the veriest stranger in the camp. And no kindness of treatment, either, served to shame his base ingratitude. He would eat demurely from James's hand, until that unsuspecting nature was lured into a caress; when, suddenly, there was a flash of hoofs, a dull thud, and the still air became resonant with smothered objurgations. He appeared to regard his sojourn with us simply in the light of a mutual convenience; all his actions plainly said: "I am not sentimental. This is a purely business transaction, with which sentiment has nothing to do."

If, however, he did not evince affection for us, it was gratifying to know that he was equally impartial in his treatment of others. He made no associates; and no moment of weakness ever betrayed him into familiarity. He even seemed to hate his own kindred, and became so violent at the passage of a file of baggage-laden donkeys that James was impelled to exclaim: "Whoa, you! scare at your own father, will you?" All this, of course, was startlingly human; it inspired one with faith in the transmigration of souls.

After Socrates had been with us more than a year, I had occasion to take an extended furlough. And, as he had cost me nothing, I sold him to a friendly quartermaster for a consideration. This consideration, upon reflection, seemed so disproportionate to his real commercial value that I was on the eve of returning a portion of the amount, when I learned that my friend had cleared a handsome profit by transferring him to Government.

When I met him again, after some months' absence from camp, with my respect for him heightened by the distance and difference of the commonplace mules of a quiet agricultural life, leading the van in an army-wagon, pinched with a gaunt meagreness, in a sadly-disordered harness, with a dimmed eye, unsteady limbs, untoned features, and nothing of himself left but his noble form of head and those erect ears standing like a monument of the dilapidated animal, I felt the contact like a blow. To add to the poignancy of my grief, he seemed to glory in his degradation. He had lost the habit of self-respect, and had ingrafted on his better nature the swagger and dash, the reckless air and roistering gait, of an army-mule. He was like some decayed swell, whose gray hairs brought no sense of reverence, and whose declining years left no noble traces to adorn the ruin. The swagger of youth contrasted strangely with the decrepitude of age, where a second colthood would still have left some symmetry in decay. My habitual respect groped for its object in such a chaos. I could have borne the shock of all natural change; but—he remembered me, and had forgotten himself!

EDITOR'S TABLE.

IT is fairly impossible in these active times for one's interest in pictures to suffer any abatement in view of the many exhibitions that follow one after another in a sort of pictorial procession. In New York, especially, the exhibitions during the spring months were numerous and unusually brilliant; they represented with tolerable fullness nearly all that is doing in modern art, and afforded every home-staying student excellent opportunity to see what progress is making in the different schools. The Latham collection, which came here from San Francisco for distribution under the auctioneer's hammer, was the first notable public exhibition; this was followed promptly by the Avery collection, the pictures of which were no sooner sold than the Cottier selection took their place in Mr. Leavitt's gallery. With these exhibitions, which consisted mostly of foreign paintings, came the first display of the new society of young artists, and the regular spring exhibition of the veteran National Academy. These several collections gave us many styles of art, various distinct theories of painting, and almost endless contrasts of method, thought, and execution. The art of the present has at least the merit of great catholicity, and the ease now with which paintings may be transported from one place to another enables a collector to bring together in one gallery examples of every living school. In earlier periods men knew but little art save that which grew up around them; but now, even in America, remote as we are from the great art-centres of Europe, we are almost as familiar with French, German, Dutch, Spanish, and Italian paintings as we are with American. And each year seems to broaden this range of study. In the Cottier collection, to which we have referred, there were a number of admirable landscapes by Dutch painters that possessed surprising qualities—illustrations of what tender beauty the in-looking eye of the artist detects in scenes that to the uninitiated are commonplace and without significance. These Dutch paintings are the latest contributions to our artistic pleasure and instruction; we have only recently come to know the modern Spanish school; and all that we need is more frequent examples of current English painting to make us *en rapport* with all the world of contemporary art.

Even our home-art continually broadens its field and attains fresh and varied methods. Some of the younger artists are infatuated by theories prevalent in France

and Germany, and struggle to express themselves by new and strange interpretations of Nature; while nearly every painter is impressed by a desire to escape from the authority of tradition, and recognizes the importance of loyalty to his own perceptions. The result of this is, that we have in our native art very little servile copying. There is to be seen cautious adherence to old forms, and some artists exert an appreciable influence; but there is very little domination of arbitrary standards. The younger artists are conspicuous rather for audacious incursions into "pastures new," many of whom will yet learn to modify their methods, and will surrender their enthusiasm for masters they are studying in favor of those greater masters, modest Truth and simple Nature.

The Academy exhibition seems to us to have more than usual interest, although it is generally declared to be inferior to the collection of last season. This is, undoubtedly, the first impression of every visitor; there are seemingly fewer brilliant and striking pictures than there were last year, and at the same time less unity and sense of strength; but, as the long rows of paintings become familiar to the eye, and each canvas separates itself from its surroundings, many excellent and many charming pictures assert themselves. There are Sanford Gifford's golden atmospheres; Inness's poetical landscapes; Huntington's and Porter's portraits of charming women, painted from palettes rich with dyes; Swain Gifford's stretches of breezy moors; the familiar rural landscapes which Hart delights in; the forest vistas that Whittredge and McEntee paint so well; the valley and mountain panorama that Bristol prefers; the domestic incidents in which Guy and Wood Perry are always felicitous; the stories of sea and coast that De Haas and Arthur Quartley love to tell; the strong heads by Alden Weir; picturesque street-scenes by Tiffany; and many other canvases by favorite artists. Paintings by the young Munich students are not so numerous as last year, the new society having secured their contributions; but one subject by Chase, "The Court-Jester," is specially noteworthy as a painting of remarkable power and freshness of conception. Yet, while admiring and acknowledging the genuine force it exhibits, it is pertinent to inquire in what way an American artist educated abroad, filled with the ideas, the examples, the theories of foreign art, is likely, with this bent of mind, to confer upon our native art any individual character or fame? "The Court-Jester" will take its place among the well-painted pictures of the period, but it can have no true identification with American art.

Of all the American pictures of the season, "The Ægean Sea," by Mr. Church, at the Goupil Gallery, is the most ambitious, the most striking, the most likely to attain lasting reputation, and to confer glory upon the national name. Like the same painter's "Heart of the Andes," it is not a view of any individual scene, but a composition wherein are gathered and epitomized the various characteristics of the locality. A wide expanse of sea half hid in vapors; indented shores dotted with classic ruins; grand cliffs and groups of superb olive-trees; glimpses of cities, seen afar over hills and dales of poetic beauty; masses of rent clouds, the successors of a recent storm, trailing over the horizon; and brilliant rainbows spanning the near heavens—these are the main features of the picture. We shall not attempt a detailed criticism of it. One may easily point out things to which he objects—he may question the rainbows and clouds as too merely pictorial and theatric, or he may discover a too elaborate delineation of details; these are unimportant in view of its great success as a whole. It is a picture that exhibits power, beauty, and imagination—the qualities that made Turner so famous; but it has none of the eccentricities of that painter to pique the critic or to force it into an unjustified notoriety.

THAT Paris has had many a political club, some of the most dramatic pages of its history amply testify; but they were scarcely what would be called "clubs" in the English or the American sense. The Jacobins, for instance, are not known to have embraced the promotion of social intercourse among their objects; and in that dingy room in the Faubourg St.-Honoré where its meetings were held, Robespierre or Marat would have appeared rather oddly to their fellow-members if they had suggested a rubber of whist or a trial of baccarat. The political clubs of Paris hitherto, in short, have been for the most part conclaves of political conspirators. But in the new, more moderate, and more peaceful times on which we have fallen, the idea has occurred to certain distinguished Frenchmen that it is quite possible that there should exist in Paris a political club after the serene and somewhat stately English fashion. It is to be called "Le Cercle National;" its members are to be moderately Republican or liberally Orleanist; it is to have President Grévy, of the Chamber, as its first head; and it is to be devoted to the making of acquaintance, the exchange of ideas, the formation of public spirit, the "moderating and stimulating of each other as occasion requires," and the making of the Republican party "more compact." To these serious objects are added the lighter attractions of social intercourse, in which good dinners by reputable *cordons bleus*, piquet, billiards, and *vingt-et-un*, cozy smoking-rooms, and bedchambers up-stairs for stray or belated club-men, may be included.

It would seem that the "Cercle National" will apply a fair test to the question which has been somewhat mooted between the two nations, whether Englishmen or Frenchmen are the most "clubable." If the English have thus far the highest club reputation, with their historic social unions, their "Beefsteaks" and "Kitcats," their "Whites" and "Crockfords," their "Roaring Lions" and "Everlastings," their "Uglies" and "Hell-Fires," not to speak of their "Reforms," "Carltons," "Athenæums," "Garricks," and "United Services"—it may be because the French have not yet fairly made a trial of their clubable capacities. In some respects, the Frenchman would seem to be better adapted to the free intercourse and social amenities of a rendezvous of picked men than his British neighbor. He is far more chatty

and fond of hobnobbing, and scrapes acquaintance on the slightest provocation. The Frenchman scarcely ever sits apart by himself; while the Englishman carries about him everywhere a sort of atmosphere which he seems to bring from his "castle," and with which he is fain to envelop himself in stern isolation. In the sense of being freely social and informally merry, the great London club is the least clubable place on earth. If you have been a member of the Reform or Carlton for thirty years, and have every day met in its corridor or smoking-room a colleague of equally long standing, to whom you have not been introduced, it will be at your peril that you speak to him. The club Englishman is "stonily frigid" to every human being who has not been formally presented to him. Even if an acquaintance is effected, and you find yourself on the easiest terms in the world with your club neighbor, you need not be in the least surprised if, on meeting him afterward at an "at-home" or garden-party, he gives you the cut direct. We should think it very probable that, in a rendezvous of four or five hundred gentlemen, the Frenchman will at least prove himself more clubable in a social sense. The lively Gaul can never imitate the sublime repose and rather grim silence which, except on rare occasions, reign in the club palaces of Pall Mall. The Cercle National is certain to provide the grateful relief of the noise of human voices.

In another respect the new society is not likely to follow very closely the example of the English clubs which M. Grévy evidently puts before his colleagues as their model. It is a mistake to suppose that these English political clubs are each composed entirely of members of one party. The Reform, for instance, is known as a Liberal club; but it contains on its roll the names of many Tories—among others, that of Lord Beaconsfield. The Carlton is supposed to be a Tory club; but there are many Liberal members of it, the most conspicuous being Mr. Gladstone. In short, these avowedly political associations have really but very little to do with politics. As bodies, they seldom take any combined political action. But we may be sure that, with the fiery antagonisms which the French display in political matters, no Bonapartist or Bourbonist will find his way into the Cercle National. The members will first ask what a candidate's politics are, then what his social traits and standing are. It is likely to be a far more thoroughly political club than the Reform or the Carlton, the Fox, the Pitt, or the Cobden; while its social features will be, no doubt, more general and more obtrusive than the staid amenities and punctilious formalities which are to be witnessed in the bow-windows of Pall Mall.

THE axiom so often repeated that it is "the unexpected which happens" is a truth which covers more ground than the merely political and social phenomena to which it is usually applied. It is as noticeable in the arts and sciences as it is in affairs generally, and is as apparent in mental forces as it is in the accidental collisions of practical interests. For more than a century, for instance, men of practical science have been experimenting in aërial navigation, and, ever since the steamboat and the locomotive have been established facts, people have looked confidently forward to air-traveling as an achievement which science would soon accomplish. But while experiment after experiment in this direction has failed, and the confident assurances of innumerable inventors come to naught, there has sprung upon us an invention which was so wholly unexpected, so absolutely even undreamed of, that not the slightest whisper of its coming reached us, not the faintest gleam of light indicated its ascent to the horizon. The phonograph is certainly a striking instance of the "unexpected which happens." It is an invention which cannot, of course, be thought of for a moment in comparison with that of steam-power or of the electric cable so far as the practical welfare of men is concerned, nor has it any such value as the discovery of methods for navigating the air would have; but it has never been outdone in surprising qualities, in the strangeness of its phenomena, in the novel and astonishing possibilities that it opens to view.

If all that the inventor of the phonograph predicts of it shall prove to be true, a magical change will come over many of our social contacts, our individual pleasures, our intellectual tasks, and some of the industries of the world. The fairly magical fact that a piece of dead metal will take up, retain, and reutter sounds with every variation of tone, is almost lost to our dazed senses in the amazing possibilities which may legitimately grow out of the discovery. Who would have thought, a few months ago, that the supremacy of the pen, so much mightier than the sword as hosts of declaimers have averred, would be threatened by a little instrument which takes up and repeats the human voice? Who would have dreamed it possible that an entirely new method of correspondence, of literary intercourse, and of artistic enjoyment, would open its wonders upon us with the spring grasses? Letter-writing is to go down among the lost arts, for soon one will have only to utter his tale to a metal disk, transmit the perforated sheet of foil to a correspondent in another place, when he, by attaching it to a phonograph, will be enabled to listen as the voice thus transmitted unfolds its narrative. Nilsson may sit at a phonograph and sing into its open trumpet one of her sweetest melodies; the foil which has been perforated in the instrument, may be electrotyped and duplicates repeated indefinitely; so that no matter where she may be, even when hushed in the grave, her voice may be heard warbling the melody on the plains of the West, in the palm-groves of the East, under the equator, and by the north seas—wherever, indeed, civilized man shall carry the new device. When a new Roscius or a new Cicero arises, his voice may be literally heard in all the land, and every intonation transmitted to distant ages. The mechanical task of writing need no longer deaden the fire of inspiration, or obstruct the flow of thought. The poet or the romancist has only to confide his impetuous ideas to the phonograph, which, as in the case of the singer's melody, may by the process already indi-

cated be thereafter listened to by entranced thousands; or the foil may go as what may be called vocal "copy," to the printer, who, instead of deciphering obscure and blotted manuscript, will only have to turn his phonograph, and deftly put its utterances into type. Every lover in this hitherto undreamed-of millennium will, no matter to what distant lands he may wander, be enabled everywhere to listen to the low, sweet tones of his mistress; every son may retain forever the sound of his dead mother's voice; every valued utterance of dear ones may be embalmed, as it were, and live with us always. Are these foolish dreams—the fantastic visions of a star-gazer? No. They are the grave predictions of Mr. Edison, the inventor of the phonograph, who is assured that these and many similar wonders will come to pass. They certainly seem to be magical, wild, fantastical, impossible even—but so a hundred years ago would have seemed a dream of the electric wire or the steam-engine.

It is not many years since the name of Madame Rachel, "Arabian Perfumer to the Queen," achieved a somewhat unenviable notoriety on both sides the Atlantic. Those who remember the tribulations of the too credulous Madame Bonodalle, a middle-aged lady, who was inspired by the "Arabian Perfumer" with the hope that, for a certain considerable sum down, she should be made "beautiful forever," will not have forgotten that Madame Rachel came to dire grief, and, despite her Oriental title and supposed miraculous lore, was ignominiously cast into prison. But the "beautifier forever" of the vain and foolish womankind of London is, it would appear, fairly irrepressible. Once more London is agog with her doings; once more she is the central figure of a *cause célèbre*. It is amazing that so old and so notorious a swindler, with the prison-brand upon her name, should still be able to dupe respectable ladies, and, emerging from her durance, should again set up, with signal success, as a conjurer of youth and beauty to faded cheeks and waning charms. Surely, human vanity emulates, in the blindness of its faith, the unquestioning devotion of the barbarian of Thibet, or the worship by the Hindoo of his god of evil. It would not be so surprising that credulous women should overlook the utter improbability of a science which could, by a few drugs and washes, render the discovery of the fountain of youth or the philosopher's stone a superfluous labor. Unhappily, the seductive assertion of the power to make "beauful forever," as well as those which are freely made to cure a cancer by a pill and consumption by a bath, seizes human frailty—especially feminine frailty—in its frailest spot. But this Madame Rachel is as well known to be a proved and convicted impostor as the "unfortunate nobleman," Tichborne, *alias* Orton, himself. The utter uselessness of her cosmetics and washes has been demonstrated before the world. Moreover, she is known to have obtained money on false pretenses, to have held on to jewels against all right, and to have led a most shameful career of fraud and deception for years. Add to this that she is grossly ignorant, unable to read or write, and that thus her assumption of mystical, Eastern lore is so absurd that the wonder is she was not long since laughed out of conceit of it. Her last performance only affords one more sad illustration of the inveterate gullibility of weak women in their mania to cling, by any means and at any risk, to the external advantages of youth.

A young married lady, a daughter of the great singer Mario, was caught in the net of the "Arabian Perfumer" by the thinnest of devices. She was told that by the payment of two hundred pounds she would be provided with certain washes which would preserve the beauty of twenty till she was sixty. A momentary glimmer of reason prompted her to ask Madame Rachel why, if she could achieve this marvel for others, she did not make her own person an example. The sly old woman was ready with her answer—that, though she seemed only sixty, she was really eighty-five! This seems to have extinguished all doubt in the mind of her customer. The first installment paid, a "wash" was given and used. The result was appalling. The victim found her face breaking out in a horrible humor. But her anxiety was appeased when Madame Rachel told her she had only to go on with the wash to not only cure the humor, but become as fair as the lilies of the field. Then the victim, unable to raise the cash to meet the demands of her aged benefactress, gave up her jewels, which the "perfumer" lost no time in pawning. Meanwhile, the bargained-for beauty came not. At last the lady, driven to despair, did what she ought to have done long before—she told her husband; and he at once caused Madame Rachel to be indicted. Perhaps it is vain to think that even so startling an example as this of the results of credulous vanity, and the brazen and dangerous arts of the quack and the beauty-restorer, will make any impression upon those who are resolved to risk health and fortune in pursuit of the most palpable of *ignes fatui*.

The opponents of tobacco "in all its forms," though they seem less active than formerly in this country, are abroad now reviving their crusade against the abominable but seductive weed with unusual energy. Societies have just been formed in France for the purpose of preaching down, and putting down, as best they can by moral suasion, the "pernicious practices of the use of tobacco;" and one of the chief of the tobacco-reformers has recently published a somewhat startling statement as to the almost universal use of the weed among the sterner sex in France. His story is certainly an interesting one, whatever we may think of its lesson, or the value of the moral he derives from it. It appears that the lively Gaul begins to smoke as a rule at school, and at the early age of eleven; and, as smoking is prohibited very strictly within the walls of the *lycée*, the scholar avails himself of his "day out" to puff away in some safe woodland or urban retreat, undisturbed all day long by visions of stern proctors. It is asserted that "he gravitates as naturally to the *bureau de tabac* as the Eng-

lish boy to the pastry-cook's or the sweet-stuff shop." Among the French lower classes, the young apprentice and the middle-aged workman trudge to their daily labor pipe in mouth, and would as soon think of leaving their kit of tools at home as their cheap, two-sou brier-wood. In the army every officer, from the stripling sub-lieutenant to the Marshal-President of the Republic, smokes indefatigably. The author composes, the artist lays on his colors, with pipe or cigarette in mouth; the shop-keeper leaves his shop in care of his *bonne femme* many times a day, to have a pull at his beloved *caporal* at the *estaminet* round the corner; the honorable deputy smokes as he awaits the train that is to take him to Versailles; the stockbroker as he hies him to the Bourse, the *flaneur* lounging on the boulevard, the clubman as he loiters at the big front-window, the advocate as he reads his brief on his way to the Palais de Justice—do all these things under the soothing influence of tobacco. It is said, indeed, that there are only two classes of Frenchmen who do not smoke: the cabmen, because they are too constantly under the vigilant watch of the police; and the priests, because they fear lest a hint of the transgression should reach the ears of their bishop. Thus, the new anti-tobacco societies have no lack of targets at which to hurl their anathemas, no want of heathen on every hand to convert to their own abhorrence of the weed. The progress of tobacco-using, and especially of smoking—for few Europeans chew, and the fine old patrician practice of snuff-taking is fast going out—is, indeed, amazingly rapid beyond the Atlantic. The large majority of males in every civilized country smoke habitually. It used to be said that excessive smoking was one of the chief causes of the decline of the Turks in vigor and enterprise; but it is doubtful whether there has not been as much smoking in the ranks of the Muscovites and Cossacks, during the past year of trial requiring consolation, as in the stubbornly-fighting but finally-defeated legions of Islam.

Books of the Day.

THE attitude of the average reading public toward French fiction is, to say the least, curious. Every one who reads at all is aware that some of the wholesomest, most natural, and most graphic tales of incident and adventure ever written have come to us from Frenchmen—the stories of Dumas *père*, and of Sue, are examples in point. "Picciola" and "Paul and Virginia" are sufficient and familiar proof that the national genius is not incapable of dealing with romance in its most refined and poetic form; while the firm hand of Victor Hugo has swept the chords of human feeling, from the deepest diapason of crime to the sublime and tender affection of a mother for her child, and the virginal passion of Dea in "The Man who Laughs." Other well-known works might be cited to show that the tender amenities of domestic life, the exaltation of religious fervor, the chaste ardors of youthful love, the varied beauties of Nature, the idyllic simplicities of rural scenes, have all found admirable exponents among French novel-writers; yet it cannot be denied that with average English and American readers the phrase "French fiction" is a sort of synonym for flimsy sentiment, frivolous thought, doubtful morality, and prurient peerings into the morbid anatomy of the human mind. Nor, indeed, can it be denied that there is ample excuse for the suspicion. The mistake lies in assuming that Dumas *fils*, Flaubert, Zola, and their kind, are peculiarly "characteristic" and "typical;" and in the common inference that, because the majority of current French novels are objectionable on the score of morality, therefore *all* must be considered *taboo*. Sweeping generalizations from particular facts are nearly always mistaken; and, besides the stories mentioned above, and others that have recently appeared in the "Collection of Foreign Authors," three new novels on our table furnish what the lawyers would call evidence in rebuttal of the prevalent assumption regarding French fiction.

For that unity, simplicity, and concentration of plot, and that incisive vivacity of style, at which French writers generally aim, "Sidonie" must still rank first among M. Daudet's works, but as a dramatic representation of character, and a vivid picture of society, "The Nabob"[1] is not only far superior to anything its author has previously done, but is one of the most noteworthy works in recent French fiction. For one thing, it is a definitive departure from the orthodox methods of the so-called Parisian school of novelists. The story is thoroughly English in the number of figures that crowd the canvas, in the complexity of the interests involved, in the subordination of wit and sentiment to reflection, in the discursiveness and amplitude of the narrative, and in the absence of that self-consciousness and perpetual straining after effect which are so apt to give a theatrical and artificial air to everything a Frenchman says or does. It is English, too, in the fact that the purpose of the author is primarily moral rather than artistic. "The Nabob" is a picture of Parisian life in the garish heyday of the Second Empire; and the evident intention is to show how essentially tawdry, hollow, contemptible, intellectually little and morally base, that superficially brilliant *régime* really was. M. Daudet, as one of the official reporters of the Chamber of Deputies, was brought into intimate relations with the leading government functionaries and the "high society" of the period, and he is able to give an interior and authentic view of the actual working of the imperial machine. Most of the "characters" of his story were easily identified by the Parisians, and the most significant portions of his work have been accepted as biography (and very luminous biography) rather than fiction. The Duc de Mora, for example, who, far more than the Nabob himself, dominates and gives coherence to the story, is a diaphanously thin disguise for the Duc de Morny, Napoleon's *protégé* and factotum; and by those who are in a position to know, the portrait is pronounced "truly Gothic" in the pitiless accuracy of its delineation. The whole episode (or "incident," as the French would call it) of De Mora is managed with pre-eminent skill. In him and the society of which the Hôtel Mora was the centre, we have a complete summary of

[1] The Nabob. A Novel. By Alphonse Daudet. Translated by Mrs. Lucy H. Hooper. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. 16mo, pp. 451.

the Lower Empire; yet the tempting nature of this particular theme, though its utmost poignancy of effect is brought out, is not allowed to destroy the *ensemble;* for M. Daudet is too accomplished an artist to spoil his points by undue emphasis or insistence. It must be said, too, that in dealing with Mora, M. Daudet proves himself to be capable of rising to higher levels than that of a photographer or portrait-painter, or even of a social satirist. The minute, subdued, but terrible picture of Mora's death gives one an almost overpowering sense of the inevitable fatality of sham and chicane; and the description of his pompous obsequies has something of that elemental grandeur and impersonal profundity of pathos of which Victor Hugo has hitherto been the unapproached and acknowledged master.

None of the other characters of the story has (or probably was intended to have) the impressiveness and definiteness of outline that distinguish Mora, but the portrait of Jenkins, the fashionable quack-doctor, has too genuine an air of reality not to be a sketch from life, and each member of the mob of minor adventurers is clearly discriminated by a few pungent phrases or a luminous dramatic side-scene. The Nabob himself, though the most labored, is, to our taste, the least satisfactory character in the story, chiefly because in him, more fully than in any of the others, is developed that (to the Teutonic mind, as Taine calls it) peculiarly repugnant French falsetto sentiment. The whole history of the hapless, harmless Nabob is intended to be deeply pathetic, but through the greater part of the story we detest and suspect him too much to pity him, and toward the close our sympathy reacts under a too evident attempt on the part of the author to "pile up the agony." It may be a lack of sensbility on our part, but we found the brief glimpses of the Nabob's peasant-mother, solitary and uncomfortable in her childless magnificence of wealth, far more genuinely touching than the elaborate and detailed picture of his own woes.

We have written to little purpose if it is necessary to add that "The Nabob" is well worth reading. Nor is it merely to the seeker after amusement that it can be commended. It is worthy of the serious consideration of the philosophic student of mankind, for it contains at least as large a proportion of authentic history as Victor Hugo's "History of a Crime," which has been sharing with it the enthusiastic admiration of the Parisian reading public.

The "Madame Gosselin" of M. Louis Ulbach,[1] though not, perhaps, superior to "The Nabob" as a work of art, nor more fascinating as a story, is wholly unalloyed by the influence of an alien school, and is in all respects a typical example of the French literary ideal. Viewed from this point, perhaps the most characteristic feature of "Madame Gosselin" is its comparative brevity of narrative. Readers who have formed their standards upon the voluminous dimensions of the modern masterpieces of English fiction would be apt on this account alone to think slightingly of a novel which can be easily hidden in the pocket or finished at a long sitting. Yet within these modest limits are portrayed — not sketched, merely, but portrayed—with an amplitude and vividness that leave nothing to be desired, one of the most powerful and thrilling tragedies, one of the tenderest and most winning idyls of youthful love, and one of the most impressive pictures of that

> "Nemesis, which never yet of human wrong
> Left the unbalanced scale,"

that can be found, probably, in the current literature of any language. It is here that the French faculty of artistic construction—the keen sense of harmony and proportion—displays itself to greatest advantage. There is no wandering off into a labyrinth of episodes; no subordination of the whole to particular parts; no elaborate exegesis of the narrative as it unwinds its slow length; no continuous obtrusion of the moral intended to be drawn. Where the story should move, it moves with a swiftness and steadiness that carry the reader along in a quivering concentration of interest; where a pause naturally comes, the reflections are apposite and to the point; where the strain of the narrative would become too oppressive, it is relieved and adorned with playful gleams of wit, with exquisite bits of natural description, with touching pictures of domestic life; where an act is performed, it is not obscured by an anxious analysis of motives; and where a character or personality is to be revealed, it is done with quick, bold, artistic strokes, and with no parade of psychological insights and refinements. As in a drama, the different characters depict themselves by their own words and conduct during the progressive evolution of the story, and are not minutely described at the outset and subsequently menœuvred like puppets.

If any reader desires to know what is meant by dramatic novel-writing, "Madame Gosselin" will afford him an excellent example. He will notice how the several *dramatis personæ* are portrayed, not by what is said about them by the author, but by what they say and do themselves, and that the portrayal keeps pace and only ends with the narrative. He will notice, too, we hope, how much firmer hold upon the imagination is taken by persons thus drawn than by those described objectively in the usual manner of novelists. He will find, we think, that Madame Gosselin and M. Pleumeur, George and Mademoiselle Berthe, and even such subordinate figures as Captain Kernuz and Pornic, will remain distinct in his memory long after the ordinary crowd of fictitious personages has faded into a nebulous mist; and a little reflection will lead him to the explanation of this, which is that the method of delineation adopted by M. Ulbach is that by which we learn to know persons in real life—that, in fact, it is the only natural and truly artistic one.

Another reflection suggested by a perusal of "Madame Gosselin" is the complete refutation which the story affords of the common delusion that Frenchmen have no comprehension of "home" and the serene enjoyments of domestic life. M. Ulbach's occasional rhapsodies on the subject might lead one to suspect that he had but a poetic appreciation of it; yet it would be difficult to find more charming pictures than he draws of prenuptial and married love, of filial and parental affection, of the little amenities and domesticities that make home so delicious a relief to the stress and turmoil of public life. M. Pleumeur and Madame Gosselin are steeped in the native hues of tragedy; but Mademoiselle Berthe is exactly such a girl and woman as Mrs. Oliphant and Miss Mulock never tire of drawing, while M. George is just the warm-hearted, high-minded, frank, and generous type of youth which, happily, is confined to no nation and no special race.

Neither "The Nabob" nor "Madame Gosselin" has called for special reference to that arch vivacity of style and that graceful lightness of touch which always characterize the better class of French society novels; but these traits are admirably exemplified in Henri Greville's

[1] Madame Gosselin. By Louis Ulbach. (Collection of Foreign Authors, No. VIII.) New York: D. Appleton & Co. 16mo, pp. 366.

"Dosia."[1] This story comes to us with the *imprimatur* of a great Parisian success, and as the recipient of the Monthyon prize of literature for the year in which it was written; yet, without exactly disappointing the reader, it will be apt to set him to reflecting upon the differences of national taste. No one with any delicacy of perception could be insensible to the exquisite art with which it is written, to its feminine grace of manner and polished precision of style; but it is almost too slight to be called a novel, it skims along the surface of society rather than depicts life, and there is a pervasive self-consciousness about it which savors rather of artifice than of art. No better illustration could be found of the superior importance which the French attach to manner as compared with substance than "Dosia" affords; for it is evidently from deliberate choice and not from any deficiency of power on the part of the author that the characters and events of the story are outlined to us by flashes of lightning, as it were, rather than portrayed by the steady and familiar light of day. Suggestion rather than delineation is the author's consciously-adopted method; and it certainly indicates remarkable skill in character-drawing that with so few and such delicate strokes the several characters of the story assume and maintain for us something like distinctive personalities. We cannot help feeling, however, that, possessing this skill, the author should have made more of such an opportunity as her conception of Dosia afforded; and that, however perfect within its self-assigned limits, that art is defective which contents itself with hints and outlines rather than with the complete embodiment of its ideas. Where M. Greville leaves off, an English novelist of equal creative power would feel as if his task had hardly begun; and perfect as it is as a composition, "Dosia" is more like the first draft or skeleton of a novel than like a novel in its complete and final form.

Still it should be frankly admitted that "Dosia" is a very charming book to read. It is piquant and vivacious, pure in sentiment, and natural in tone, subtile in its insights if meagre in its delineation of character, fresh and interesting in its incidents, picturesque in its accessories, and with a certain feminine ease and refinement of manner. It may not inappropriately be described as a dainty bit of *genre*-painting, and it is probably not without value as a picture of one phase of Russian society. The translation, too, is so exceptionally good as to deserve mention.

WHEN it is not the mere affectation of superior knowledge which Goldsmith satirized so keenly, almost the severest thing that can be said of an author's or artist's work is that (as the Philosophic Vagabond phrases it) "it would have been better if he had taken more pains." The real nature of so-called inspiration is so little understood that young poets in particular are apt to think that much painstaking takes the bloom off of the sentiment and savors of mechanical verse-making, while voluble spontaneity is considered a sort of test of the genuineness of the poetic faculty. No such mistake has been made by Mr. Edgar Fawcett, and one of the first and most persistent impressions received by the reader of his collected poems[2] is the exceptional predominance in him of what we may call the artist-faculty. There is no lack of that freshness of thought and ardor of feeling which always and everywhere distinguish the real singer from the verse-monger, however expert the latter may be; but the perfection of the form, the firmness of the outlines, the terse brevity of expression where brevity is a gain, and the unfailing success with which the words are fitted to the thought or sentiment, bespeak, if not "long days of labor and nights devoid of ease," at least a commendable purpose on the part of the author not to allow his voice to be lost in the general choir of ephemeral singers for want of care on his own part in cultivating its tones. Some of his shorter poems are little less than wonderful for the exactness with which words are made to represent not only the ideas or feelings suggested by a natural object, but its very texture, color, and aroma, so to speak; and those who have endeavored this sort of description in either prose or verse need not be told that it is no spontaneous or effortless product of the mind, but involves the most patient study of the laws of language, and the mysterious affinities of words.

The most perfect example of what we mean is the little poem entitled "The Tuberose," but this has been reproduced so often that we simply direct renewed attention to it, and (hesitating whether to select "Sea-Gulls," "Reverie," "To an Oriole," or one of the exquisite sonnets on "Fabrics") quote the following description of—

"AN OCTOBER DAY.

"The emergent sun looks forth on sparkling grass,
Filmed with the frost's pale gossamer of snow.
And now long resonant breezes wake and blow
The empurpled mists from meadow and morass.
The withering aster shivers; dry leaves pass;
Red sumachs burn; the yellowing birches glow;
And on the elastic air, in many a mass,
Rolling through pale-blue heaven, the great clouds go!

"In the afternoon all windy sounds are still:
From wooded ways the cricket's chirp takes flight.
And the dreamy autumn hours lapse on until . . . .
See! the sweet evening star, that night by night
Drops luminous, like an ever-falling tear,
Down dying twilights of the dying year!"

It should be said, however, that this very aptitude for and skill in word-painting, while it originates some of the most pleasing qualities of Mr. Fawcett's verse, is also responsible for what is perhaps its worst occasional defect. Every positive merit is apt, as the moralists say, to have its negative fault; and the very dexterity and facility with which Mr. Fawcett uses language seduce him now and then into attempting strange feats of verbal gymnastics, which, even when successful, have no more relationship with true poetry than the test "execution" pieces with music, and which usually involve inadmissible contortions of both sense and expression. Swinburne is mainly responsible for the transient vogue of this convoluted verse; but he is a peculiarly dangerous model for younger poets, both because he is so perfect a master of it as almost to defy rivalry, and because the manner is so pronounced that to adopt it is almost necessarily to incur the charge of imitation.

The second characteristic of Mr. Fawcett's poetry which will be apt to attract the reader's attention is its pictorial vividness. Whatever Mr. Fawcett pictures to himself or apprehends imaginatively he sees with a distinctness and depicts with a realism that is rarely attained even by those describing an actual object. So firm and precise are the outlines, indeed, that there would be a certain element of hardness in the poetry were it not illumined and adorned by the delicate and continuous play of fancy. There is no subject so hackneyed, no thought so trite, and no object so commonplace, that Mr. Fawcett cannot embroider it with graceful and dainty conceits; and he demonstrates anew that for the poet Nature is ever fresh and ever young. If, as Hazlitt says, surprise and unexpectedness are a prime source of intellectual pleasure, then much of the attractiveness of his verse is explained; for, however hackneyed or unpromis-

[1] Dosia. A Russian Story. From the French of Henri Greville. By Mary Neal Sherwood. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. 16mo, pp. 260.

[2] Fantasy and Passion. By Edgar Fawcett. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 16mo, pp. 191.

ing the title of a poem may be, there is sure to be something original and attention-compelling in its view-point or method of treatment. For one thing, Mr. Fawcett is fond of bringing out the analogies between Nature and human life; and here, of course, the varied suggestiveness of even a single object is practically inexhaustible.

With the realistic imagination of which we have spoken, Mr. Fawcett ought to exhibit a marked dramatic faculty, but this is precisely where he is weakest and least satisfactory. Even his narrative verse is poor in comparison with his descriptive pieces and sonnets, and whoever the ostensible speaker may be, his own voice formulates the syllables. Nor is the reason far to seek. Vividly as he perceives an object or situation, he yet always sees it from his own point of view and with his own eyes; and he is apt to see it, too, in its most concrete and (so to say) intense form. He is not successful in linking together the consecutive thoughts, events, and images, which constitute narrative poetry; and his happiest pieces are those dealing with a single and isolated conception, or sentiment, or picture. But, whatever may be the limitations of his faculty, there can be no doubt that Mr. Fawcett is, within his range, a true poet, that he is an artist of a high order, and that his modest little volume will gain him a high and lasting reputation, even should his future work fail to meet those expectations that will now justly be entertained of it.

KEEN and general as is the interest in everything connected with the stage, there are few departments of literature so little enriched by good and permanently valuable writing as that of dramatic criticism. Even when the criticism is based on knowledge and insight, it is apt to be a crude mass of unsystematized opinions, or at best the record of individual impressions and preferences; and the late Edwin Forrest, who was deeply read in the literature of his profession, used to complain that there was not in existence a book or treatise from which one could deduce a sound philosophy of the dramatic art, or get a clear conception of the conditions of success in acting. It can hardly be said that Mr. George Henry Lewes's little volume, "On Actors and the Art of Acting,"[1] deprives this complaint of its force; but Mr. Lewes certainly has a perfectly definite and logical theory of the actor's art, and, though this theory is not developed systematically in the desultory papers of which the volume is composed, yet it furnishes the standard of the author's judgments in particular cases, and the reader will find no difficulty in gathering its substance. In fact, by most readers it will be gathered all the more readily because it is not cast in logical formulas, but is brought out casually and disconnectedly, as some special principle is illustrated by a particular actor or by some characteristic manifestation of the actor's art.

Mr. Lewes's survey of the stage extends from Edmund Kean to Salvini, and includes all the great actors and actresses of that brilliant period, as well on the Continent as in England. Besides the two named, Charles Kean, Macready, Farren, Charles Mathews, the two Keeleys, Rachel, and Frédéric Lemaître, form the subject of separate essays; and in the chapters on the drama in Paris, in Germany, and in Spain, and on foreign actors on the English stage, reference is made to nearly every prominent Continental actor of the present and immediately preceding generations. Like every competent observer who saw Edmund Kean in the splendid maturity of his powers, Mr. Lewes considers him "incomparably the greatest actor" of recent times, yet the author's large hospitality of mind and complete freedom from insular prejudice is shown by his cordial recognition of the genius and skill of Salvini, whose Othello he pronounces, "though in certain passages manifestly inferior" to Kean's, "as a whole of more sustained excellence." In all the chapters dealing with particular actors and plays, acute and suggestive criticism alternates with animated description of personal traits; and the fact that most of the papers were inspired by special occasions gains for them in liveliness and minuteness of detail more than they lose by the lack of methodical exposition. The chapters on "Shakespeare as Actor and Critic" and "Natural Acting" summarize and illustrate Mr. Lewes's theory of the art; but for a full understanding the whole book should be perused, and there is not a page which will fail to repay the reader in instruction as well as entertainment.

[1] On Actors and the Art of Acting. By George Henry Lewes. Amateur Series. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 12mo, pp. 237.

No just complaint on the score of a lack of practicality can be made against Mr. Nichols's "Pottery: How it is made; its Shape and Decoration,"[1] which is addressed not so much to collectors and readers as to those who are seeking to acquire the art of decorating pottery, either for entertainment or as a remunerative occupation. There are a very cursory and fragmentary sketch of the general history of the art, a careful account of the materials and methods of manufacture, brief descriptions of the leading wares now made in different countries, and a useful summary of the tests and marks of identification applied by connoisseurs; but the main purpose of the book is quite apart from these, being (as the author says) "to describe the laws which govern the decoration of pottery, and to give practical instruction in the art of painting, either with vitrifiable or common oil colors, upon hard or soft porcelain, or upon earthenware." The instructions are very precise and specific, are relieved of all technical or obscure terms that might perplex the amateur, cover the entire process from the selection and mixing of the colors to the final "burning," and inspire confidence as the work of one who fully understands what he attempts to teach. Judging from the number of those who, as professionals or as amateurs, have lately been attracted to this art, there must be hundreds that have been longing for just such a book; and there can be no doubt that it will contribute more than would a score of historical and descriptive treatises to the establishment of the manufacture and decoration of pottery as one of our national industries. Among the illustrations to the volume (all of which are admirable) there are a number of plates of Japanese designs, printed in colors, which will prove useful to the decorator both as patterns and as hints for independent designs. The others are for the most part reproductions of famous and characteristic specimens of the ceramic art.

Appended to the treatise is a comprehensive bibliography of the ceramic art, including the standard works upon the subject in all languages.

[1] Pottery: How it is made; its Shape and Decoration. Practical Instructions for Painting on Porcelain and all Kinds of Pottery. With Forty-two Illustrations. By George Ward Nichols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 12mo, pp. 142.

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